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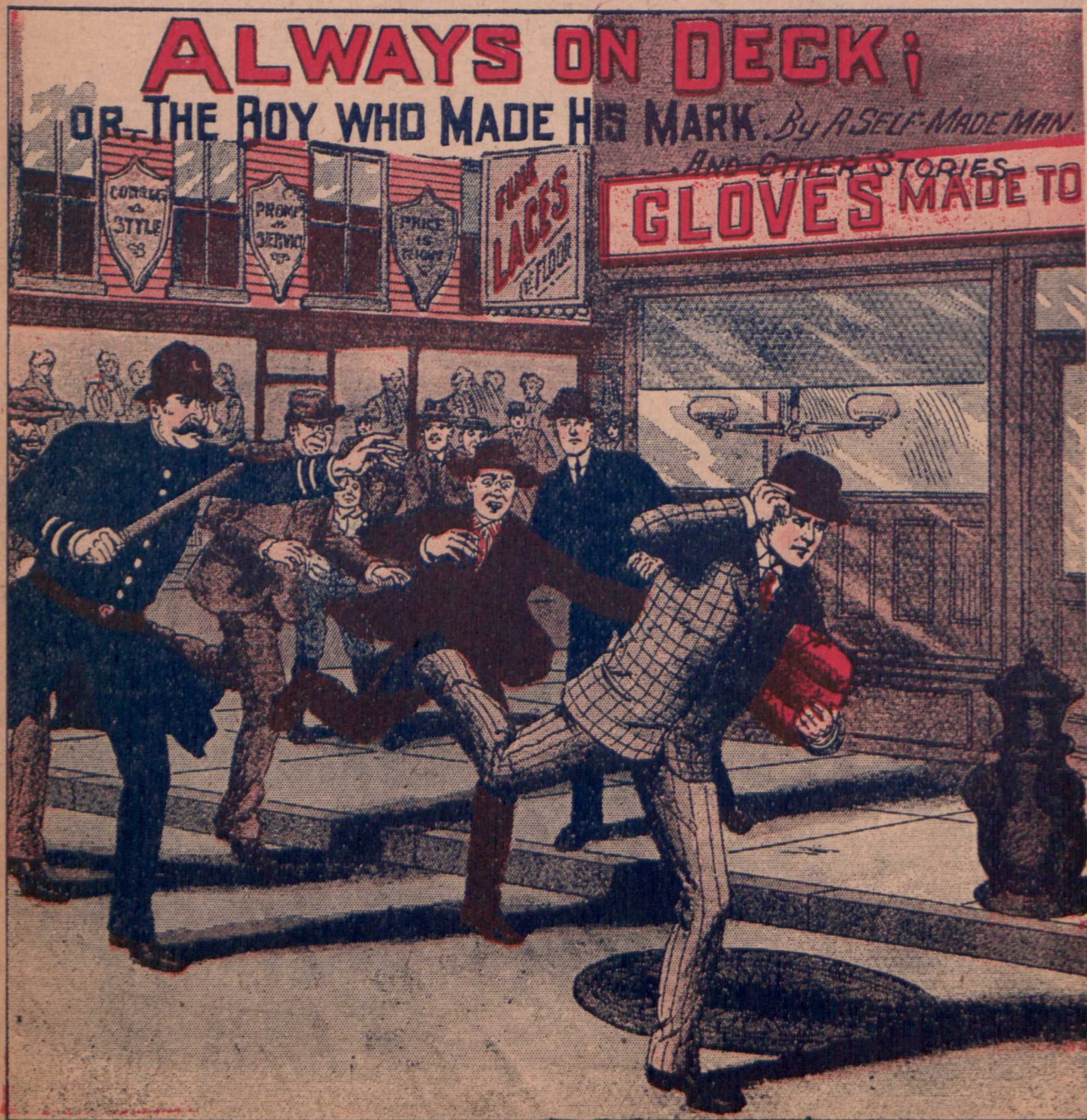
5835
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MAY 16, 1924

Price 8 Cents

FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

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BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.



'Stop thief!' roared Danny Mack again and again, as he led the crowd that followed close on the boy's heels. A policeman standing on the corner joined in the chase.
It was a strenuous moment for Tom Sherwood.

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Issued weekly—Subscription price, \$4.00 per year; Canada, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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NEW YORK, MAY 16, 1924

Price 8 Cents.

ALWAYS ON DECK

OR, THE BOY WHO MADE HIS MARK

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine.

"What are you doing, Tom?" asked Sam Wiley, Tom Sherwood's particular chum, one Saturday afternoon, after knocking at the door of his friend's "sanctum sanctorum," as Tom called it, on the second floor of the Sherwood carriage-house, and gaining admittance upon uttering some password which had been arranged between the two boys.

"Making furniture polish," replied Tom, serenely, returning to a copper kettle which stood upon a small gas-stove in a sunny corner of the unfinished room, and recommencing the stirring of the amber-colored mixture it contained.

"Furniture polish!" exclaimed his friend, looking into the kettle with some interest.

"Exactly. I am manufacturing Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine—the best polish for making old furniture look like new on this or any other market."

"You don't say," grinned Sam.

"I do say it. This polish hasn't its equal on the face of the globe."

"How do you know it hasn't?"

"How do I know it? Do you see those bottles on that shelf?"

"Sure I see them. What's in 'em?"

"Furniture polish," replied Tom, emphatically. "Look at the labels."

"In all those bottle?"

"Yes, in all those bottles. There's a sample on that shelf of every wood polish I know of on the American market, whether domestic or imported."

"What do you do with 'em?"

"I use them for comparison of results."

"You've got the furniture polish business down fine, haven't you?" grinned Sam.

"I've only named three out of the twenty-seven varieties I have on the shelf. That little crooked-looking bottle at the end of the row came all the way from Calcutta, in India. It's a very good polish for certain kinds of wood, but what I have been experimenting upon is a universal wood polish. That's what Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine is. Compared with my article the Calcutta product isn't in it, the Boston, Cincinnati

and German polishes take a back seat, while the other twenty-three look like thirty cents beside it."

"Your preparation must be something wonderful!" snickered Sam.

"You can just bank on it that it is," replied Tom, confidently.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating," chuckled his chum. "Let me see some evidence of the goods."

"I'll let you see a dozen. One ought to do, though, for the superiority of my polish over all the others is apparent at a glance."

"Let me see if it is. It's a good one if it beats either of the three I selected."

"It lays away over them. Look at that small rocker standing by the window. I guess it's dry enough for you to handle. It's had two coats of my polish, just as those twenty-seven sections of the three chairs had two coats each of its particular polish. Now, Sam, tell me what you think of it as a disinterested critic."

Sam went over and looked at the rocker.

"Gee whiz! Is that your polish?" he asked, with wonder in his eyes.

"That's my polish—Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine. Don't forget the name, please. How will it look on the billboards, in the street cars, and the newspapers?"

"Going to go on the road with your polish?"

"Yes. I shall practise on this burg. Then, after I have temporarily exhausted my native heath I'm going to travel."

"But what will your folks say?"

"My folks!"

A cloud came over Tom's brow. The atmosphere of his home was not a congenial one to him. Tom often told himself that his father and mother, while good people, as the world goes, were not like other boys' fathers and mothers. There was not that familiarity between him and his parents that he saw between other boys and their parents. There was a great difference, too, in his mother's treatment of him and his half-brother Henry—for the present Mrs. Sherwood was Tom's stepmother, having married Mr. Sherwood a year after Tom's real mother died when Tom was only a year old.

Although Henry was the younger branch of the family by nearly two years, he came in for all the good things dispensed by either Mr. or Mrs. Sherwood. As for Tom, he got the short end of everything, from parental affection down to most ordinary privileges. Is it astounding that Henry should notice how much more important he appeared to be in the family, and feel inclined to rub it into Tom? It was probably because Tom looked very like his dead mother, and had the best traits of her strong and self-reliant nature ingrafted in him, that the present Mrs. Sherwood treated him so coolly and as his step-mother ruled the house, and molded her husband's opinions, Mr. Sherwood fell into line and handled his first-born very often without gloves, while he lavished what affection was in him on Henry. It was a long time before Tom discovered the true relationship between himself and the lady he had all along supposed to be his natural mother. When the truth came to him, which it did one day by accident, he was not only greatly astonished and disturbed, but a good many things which hitherto he had not been able to understand became perfectly clear to him.

A few months before the opening of our story Mrs. Sherwood became dissatisfied with the general appearance of the furniture in the house. In her opinion it was taking on a dull and commonplace look, and so she decided it ought to be polished up. She bought a bottle of a well-known polish, and set the maid to fill in an hour or so a day at the work. Tom and the maid were on first-class terms, and the boy often stopped to chat with her. The polishing process rather interested him, and he tried his hand at a chair or two. On one of these occasions he accidentally spilled over the leg of one of the chairs a certain preparation he had just purchased at a paint store, and he hastily rubbed it off with the rag he had been using to apply the polish.

The result was that the combination of the preparation and the polish produced a remarkably lustrous effect that made the rest of the polished wood look like thirty cents. Tom at first was puzzled by the outcome, and he tried to wipe it out, but the more he wiped the more brilliant, if anything, the chair leg became. He stopped and thought the matter over. As it was one of the black legs of the chair, he judged that it would not easily be noticed, so he decided to repeat the experiment on the other leg, and thus make the two uniform. Combining the two preparations once more he found the result was the same. That evening when thinking the matter over he got a grand idea—he would see if he could make a new polish that would have every other polish on the market skinned to death. The first thing he did was to study up the recipes for making the general run of furniture polish.

Then he got some practical instruction from a man in a furniture store who made the polish used by the establishment. Then he started in to buy a small bottle of every furniture polish on the market, and succeeded in getting hold of twenty-seven varieties. He now manufactured a sample of his own unique polish, and the results far exceeded what he had accidentally produced on the back legs of the parlor chair. In fact, it actually produced a preparation that put the best French luster in the shade.

CHAPTER II.—The Partnership.

"My folks!" repeated Tom, gloomily. "Oh, I guess it wouldn't worry them much if I went off a while on a jaunt. They've got Henry, and he seems to be about the whole thing around the house. I'm not in it even a little bit."

Sam made no reply to this, and his face assumed a rather somber cast, too. He knew how things were with his chum. Tom had long since made him his confidant on the subject, and he felt sorry for his friend. Sam had lost his own father at an early age, but he had a mother who thought the world of him, as most mothers do of an only son, and showed it in every way. Tom imagined that his parents wouldn't care whether he went away or not, but in this he was mistaken. The fact that Henry was the apple of their eyes did not mean that they had no interest at all in Tom. But it was the utter lack of sympathy between them and the boy which gave Tom the impression that he was a mere cipher in the house.

"Now that you have finished at the High School, I thought your father intended to send you to the Dunwoodie Academy?" said Sam, regarding his chum thoughtfully.

"So he does."

"Why don't you go? I wish I had your chance."

"Because I'd sooner go into the furniture polish business."

"But you could let that wait till you finished at the academy."

"I could, but I'm not going to."

"I think you're foolish."

"You've a right to your opinion," replied Tom, shortly.

"Don't get mad, old chap," said Sam. "But you're young yet, and there is lots of time to get into business. Now is the time to get all the education you can while you have got the chance."

"That's all right, Sam. But I'm satisfied father's idea in sending me to the Dunwoodie Academy is merely for the sake of appearances. It wouldn't look well for people of our social standing to put their eldest son to work in a store or an office too soon."

"I guess you're right about that," replied Sam, nodding his head. "According to that, then, I don't see how you'll be able to take up your furniture polish business until after you've been through the academy. Your father wouldn't allow you to do so."

"I'm not going to consult him about the matter at all. I'm just going to go ahead with the thing during vacation. By the time he's ready to talk school I expect to be in shape to talk business."

"Oh, I see. And then, if he refuses to let you continue——"

"We'll talk about that another time. I never cross a bridge before I come to it."

"What do you say to me going in with you? You will want somebody to help."

"That's right. I want somebody I can trust to make the polish while I devote my energies to introducing it."

"You can trust me all right."

"I know I can; that's why I would like to have

you with me. Besides, I am sure there is a fortune in this thing, and I would rather put you in the way of making good money than take in a stranger."

"I'm much obliged to you, Tom," replied Sam.

"You're welcome. You've always stuck by me in the past and I'm going to stick by you in the future if you'll let me."

"That'll be fine," cried Sam, who was now so deeply interested in the new furniture polish that he could think of nothing else.

"Now let's go over to the ball field," suggested Tom. "Most of the fellows will be there this afternoon, and I feel in the humor of getting into a game."

"All right," replied Sam, who played second base for the High School team, and was a good one.

Tom led the way to the door, which he unlocked and threw wide open. Just outside, on his hands and knees in the attitude of a listener, was Steven Porter, the one boy in his class at school whom Tom Sherwood never liked, because his manners were unpleasant, and he had earned the unenviable reputation of a sneak and tale-bearer.

CHAPTER III.—Steve Porter's Mishap.

"Steve Porter!" exclaimed Tom, in a tone of the greatest surprise. "What are you doing up here in our carriage-house?"

Steve scrambled to his feet in great confusion. He had been caught in an embarrassing situation, and he looked guilty.

"I just came here to see you," replied Steve, in a sulky tone.

"Came to see me, eh?" replied Tom. "Then why were you listening at the door of my work-room?"

"I heard you was makin' a furniture polish, and I came around to buy a bottle."

"Who told you I was making a furniture polish?"

"One of the boys."

"Who is he, then?"

Steve was cornered, and he didn't know what to say. Finally he blurted out the name of one of Tom's friends.

"You say Al Goodrich told you?"

"Yes."

"Look here, Steve, you know you're not telling the truth."

"Do you mean to say that I lie?" flared up Porter.

"That's a pretty strong word, Steve Porter; but I'm afraid it fits the case exactly."

"How do you know he didn't tell me?" asked Steve, sulkily.

"Because I never said a word to him about making furniture polish."

"You are makin' it, ain't you?"

"What business is that of yours?"

"I s'pose a fellow can ask a civil question, can't he?"

"Look here, Steve Porter, why did you sneak in here?" I didn't invite you to call on me."

"I didn't sneak in."

"Yes, you did. If you had walked up those stairs like a decent person I should have heard

you. I won't stand for any monkey business from you or anybody else. You know what the fellows think of you."

"I don't know nothin' about it. I'm as good as anybody else."

"Well, I don't care whether you think you are or not. I want you to understand that I've no use for your society, so please keep on the other side of our fence hereafter. If I catch you in this building again there'll be something doing that you won't like."

Steve Porter gave Tom a vindictive look, and walked down the stairs.

"The mean sneak was trying to find out what I do in that room," said Tom, as he locked the door and put the key in his pocket.

Then they headed for the ball ground. Steve Porter watched them go from behind a neighboring tree.

"How I hate that stuck-up Tom Sherwood!" he hissed. "Just as if he was any better than me! And that Sam Wiley, too, drat him! And all the rest of 'em, who are always jumpin' on me. I hate the whole lot of 'em, but Tom Sherwood worst of all. So they're goin' to the ball ground to play ball. If I went the fellows wouldn't let me play. They never let me do nothin'. I'd like to get square with the bunch. Well, I've found out somethin', anyway. Sherwood is makin' a furniture polish that he told Wiley is better than anythin' on the market. I'd like to know whether it is or not. If it is I'd steal it from him and sell it myself. If I could get into that room now he's away I might find out all about it. He said he'd fix me if he caught me in his carriage-house again. Bah! He won't be back in three hours. That'll give me plenty of time to find out what I want to know. There ain't anybody at home but the women servants in the kitchen. The coachman has taken Hen Sherwood and his mother out drivin', so the coast is clear for me. But how can I get into that room? He keeps the door locked always, I know. I'll go down to the locksmith in the next street, and ask him to lend me a bunch of keys to open an ordinary door with. That'll be great."

Full of this idea, Steve Porter hurried to the locksmith, got a bunch of twenty-odd keys, and hiding them under his jacket, returned to the Sherwood carriage-house, mounted the stairs, and reaching the door of Tom's sanctum, began to try them, one after another, in the lock. One of the keys fitted the lock, and the door swung open. Steve took that particular key off the ring, entered the room, and locked the door after him. Then he gazed with a great deal of curiosity about the room, which had been as a sealed book to most of Tom's associates.

"I s'pose this is the furniture polish he's makin'?" said Steve to himself, looking into the copper kettle.

He picked up the ladle and began to stir it.

"I'd like to know what it's made of."

Then his sharp eyes spied the recipe and directions for making the common kind of polish, and he snatched it up and read it.

"I'll copy that," he breathed, eagerly. "I've got his secret. Ho, ho! I'll make the stuff myself, and I'll sell it for half-price and do him up. That's the way I'll fix him. Oh, how I hate him!"

Steve hurriedly scribbled off the list of in-

gredients and directions. He didn't know how badly he was fooling himself, for he would have found that recipe in a dozen books of such things on sale at the bookstores. The secret of the Invincible Lusterine lay entirely in the combination of a certain preparation found at paint stores with the ordinary polish mixture as given in the recipe Steve held in his hand. It was necessary, or even good policy, for Tom to commit his formula to paper. As long as the secret of his preparation remained in his own brain it was safe. He walked about the room examining everything he saw. When he had satisfied his curiosity he returned to the kettle.

"I'd like to spoil this stuff on him. I heard him say it was all ready for bottling. Then maybe if I carried off the recipe he wouldn't be able to make any more, and I'd have the secret all to myself."

His eyes sparkled wickedly, and he looked around for something to throw into the kettle that would have the desired effect. On a small shelf was a saucer of very white sand.

"That'll do," he grinned. "That'll make it gritty. Then it'll scratch any furniture it's applied to. It'll spoil the furniture and the sale of his polish. What fun that'll be!"

He reached for the sand. In doing so he slipped on a round piece of metal which lay on the floor. He reached out his hand to save himself, and accidentally caught hold of the kettle. It went over with him, drenching him from head to foot, and filling his ears, nose, and mouth with the still hot liquid polish. He uttered a yell that was heard in the kitchen of the Sherwood house, and then rolled about the floor in a paroxysm of pain. Steve suffered considerable torture for the next fifteen minutes. Then, blubbing like a child, he picked up a rag and tried to clean himself. As soon as he got rid of the superfluous stuff he sneaked out of the room, relocked the door, took the ring of keys to the locksmith, who regarded his bedraggled appearance with some surprise, and then hurried off to the nearest drug store.

CHAPTER IV.—A Gallant Rescue.

In the meantime Tom Sherwood and Sam Wiley went to the ball field, and spent nearly three hours practising with their schoolmates. They had a good time, as a matter of course. At length the game was finished, and the young ball tossers dispersed for their homes. Sam walked part of the way home with Tom, and left him at his own gate. As Tom turned into the street above his own, the most tony thoroughfare in Englewood, his attention was suddenly attracted to the residence of Thomas Hanford, the president of the First National Bank of Englewood. A suspicious-looking dark smoke was issuing from the tops of two windows on the second floor.

"Gee whiz!" exclaimed the boy, stopping and looking up at the house. "I believe Hanford's place is on fire."

Hardly had he uttered the words before he saw a spurt of flame crawl up the curtains of one of the windows, and the smoke grew denser.

Most any boy under the circumstances would have started in yelling "Fire!" and making some howl generally. Tom had more presence of mind than that. He darted for the automatic fire-alarm box, which he knew stood at the corner of the street, and sent in the alarm, then he rushed back to the burning building, which had already attracted the attention of several passers-by. He sprang through one of the iron gates, flew across the lawn toward the rear of the mansion, and running to the kitchen annex gave the alarm to the cook and other servants downstairs. In great consternation all of them tumbled out into the grounds. The fire was now making good headway, and a crowd was beginning to collect in the street outside.

"Where's the family?" asked Tom of a hysterical maid.

"All out riding except Miss Olive."

"And where is Miss Olive?"

"Up in her room on the third floor. She has a severe headache, and couldn't go out this afternoon."

Tom, conscious that Miss Olive Hanford, the fifteen-year-old daughter of the house, was in great danger, darted for the kitchen once more with the intention of making his way upstairs to the third floor, and giving the young girl warning of her peril. No sooner was he inside the house than the smell of burning wood came quite plainly to his nose. Flying up the broad stairway, two steps at a time, he was met at the head of the flight by a dense cloud of smoke which was pouring out through one of the doors, which stood ajar. He had no idea which door opened into Miss Olive's room, but time was too precious for him to stand on ceremony, so he threw open the first one at hand, and entered the apartment. There was no one in it, so he tried the next, with a similar result. Then he dashed into the front room, which was directly over the fire below. The noise he made startled into wakefulness a lovely young girl, who had been lying asleep on the bed. Olive Hanford scarcely knew whether she ought to scream or not under the circumstances, for though Tom didn't look very ferocious, he was certainly very much excited.

"Quick!" he shouted, the moment his eyes rested on her. "Come with me. The house is on fire."

If the girl had been startled before she was more so now. She jumped to the floor and ran up to Tom. She uttered a little shriek as she saw the thick smoke coming up the staircase and floating into the room. Then she flew to the closed window-blinds and threw them open. Tom rushed up and grabbed her by the arm.

"There is not a moment to lose if we are to escape by the stairway."

She understood, and permitted him to lead her out into the corridor. But one look down the stairway showed both the utter impossibility of passing through that mass of smoke, now lighted up by the flames which were eating their way gradually up the stairs. Tom then, encircling her slender waist with his arm, drew her into the rear room, and throwing up one of the windows, looked out. There was no escape for them in that direction—nothing but a clear drop of

three stories to the lawn. Then Tom thought of the roof.

"Where is the ladder leading to the roof?" he asked Olive, feverishly.

She tremblingly pointed to a door in a corner of the upper landing. He dashed it open, ran up the steps, and unshipped the scuttle. Then he came down again and assisted her up. The pure air of heaven was a great relief to their parched throats and smarting eyes. Tom made his way to the edge of the roof in front, and looked down at the throng below, and the active firemen who were bringing up their hose. He saw that the flames had made their way into the third floor front room, and that the house was now threatened with complete destruction. The building had an ell one story lower than where Tom and Olive stood, and the boy felt they must reach that somehow, as the fire had not yet got as far as that. Had he been alone he would have thought nothing of jumping the distance, but he had the girl to save, and could not desert her that way. While he was considering how to get her on the upper roof, the flames appeared over the front and opposite side of the roof, making it imperatively necessary for them to make a hasty change of base.

"We must get down to the roof of the ell," he said to his fair companion.

"How can we? Must I jump?" she asked, shrinking from the ordeal.

"I am going to let myself down as far as I can, and hold my position by a grip on the coping. You must do likewise, then throw your arms around me and slide down till you reach my feet, when you must drop. The distance will then be only a few feet."

She agreed to attempt this method, which seemed to be the only available one. Tom carried out his part of it, then at his bidding Olive also lowered herself alongside of him, then grasped him about the neck and shoulders, and slowly allowed herself to slip down till she swung by her hold on his shoes only. Then she dropped safely to the roof of the ell. Tom followed her a moment later. They were now comparatively safe, and had only to wait till a ladder was raised, and they were both taken down. As soon as she reached the lawn and knew that she was safe Olive fainted.

CHAPTER V.—A Chance Comes Over the Sherwood Household.

By this time the Hanford residence was a mass of flames from the second story up, while the firemen had their hands full trying to save the ground floor and its valuable contents. Tom placed the unconscious Olive in the hands of one of the maids, and then retired to a distance to watch the progress of the fire. An Argus-eyed reporter followed him up, and much against his will the boy gave his name and address, and such particulars of his experience in the burning house as the reporter wanted for his story.

The family were at dinner when Tom got back to his home. After dinner Tom went to his sanctum. He thought he might as well put the supply of Invincible Lusterine he had made that

afternoon into bottles, so as to have them all ready for labeling and wrapping. He was amazed to find the copper kettle overturned on the floor, and its contents in pools and blotches in the vicinity of the gas-stove. He went to the door, and looked at the lock to see if it had been tampered with, but there were no signs of such a thing. Then he examined the open window-sill for some indication that a ladder might have been used to effect an entrance through it. He couldn't find any scratches.

"I'll go down and see if the ladder has been disturbed lately," he said.

He did, but the ladder lay in its accustomed position just as he had noticed it that morning.

This ladder hasn't been used to-day," he muttered. "Whoever was in my work-room got in by the door, and he must have had a duplicate key to my own. I don't like the looks of this for a cent. I must get a new lock."

He returned to the room and cleaned up the damage that had been done. It was half-past eight o'clock, and the Sherwood family were gathered in their sitting-room. Mr. Sherwood was reading a current copy of one of the monthly magazines, his wife was sewing, while Tom and Henry were seated on opposite sides of the center-table absorbed in their favorite literature. At that moment the door-bell rang.

"I wonder who that can be?" said Mrs. Sherwood, looking up from her work.

"I have no idea," replied her husband, as the patter of the maid's feet was heard in the hall.

Presently the maid knocked at the door.

"Come in," said Mr. Sherwood.

"There's a gentleman in the parlor, sir. He wishes to see Tom."

"Wishes to see Tom?" exclaimed Mr. Sherwood. "Did he say what his name was?"

"Yes, sir. It's Hanford."

"Hanford!" ejaculated Tom's father in some astonishment, for he did not enjoy the acquaintance of the bank president. "Did you say he asked for Tom?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll go and see him myself," said Mr. Sherwood, suiting the action to the word.

He was absent about five minutes, when he returned and called his eldest son out of the sitting-room.

"Why didn't you tell us that you saved Mr. Hanford's daughter from being burned to death in the fire this afternoon?" he said to Tom.

"Neither you nor mother gave me much chance to say anything about the fire when I came in to dinner."

"You have had plenty opportunity to mention the circumstances since you have been in the sitting-room."

"I didn't think you would feel particularly interested in my connection with the affair; besides, I didn't do anything extraordinary, anyway," replied Tom.

"Didn't do anything extraordinary, eh? Didn't you go into the burning house, make your way through the smoke and fire to the third floor where Mr. Hanford's daughter was asleep, get her to the roof, and then assist her down to the roof of the ell, from which the firemen rescued you both?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you don't call that anything out of the ordinary? Go into the parlor. Mr. Hanford wants to see you."

"Tom Sherwood, I am under the greatest of obligations to you for the service you rendered my daughter Olive during the fire at my residence," said the banker as soon as Tom entered the parlor. "My daughter says that but for you she would have been burned to death, as she never would have been able to have got out of the house herself. She is our only child, my lad," continued Mr. Hanford, with emotion, "so you may easily imagine how her mother and I feel toward you for your brave conduct in her behalf. You took many chances in going to her assistance, and might have shared the same fate you tried, successfully, I am happy to say, to avert. We shall never forget the debt we owe you, neither will Olive, who is more than anxious to meet you again, so as to express her gratitude. We are now stopping temporarily at my sister's home on Hancock street. The number is 222. You must call there to-morrow without fail, as Mrs. Hanford is very anxious to thank you herself."

"I'm glad I happened to come along at the right moment, sir," replied the boy. "I only did what anybody should have done under the circumstances," he added modestly.

Mr. Hanford, however, insisted that he had acted like a young hero, and that every dollar he owned in the world would be insufficient to cancel the debt he owed Tom if he were to settle the obligation in that way.

"Now, my lad, you can rely on our personal friendship after this. You must call and see us, Olive in particular, as often as you feel disposed to do so. And if ever I can do you a favor don't fail to let me know."

With these words, and exacting a promise from Tom that he would surely call at 222 Hancock street next day, the banker took his departure. When Tom returned to the sitting-room he found his mother and father talking about him, with Henry as an interested listener.

"Your mother and I wish to hear the whole story about your rescue of Mr. Hanford's daughter," said Mr. Sherwood, in a tone somewhat different to that which he was accustomed to use toward his first-born. "From the little I heard from Mr. Hanford's lips it would appear that you performed a highly commendable action."

Tom regarded his father with some surprise. This was the first time within his recollection that Mr. Sherwood had addressed him in that strain. His stepmother, too, seemed to view him in a different light. In response to his father's request the boy narrated his adventure from the moment he had first seen the smoke issuing from the tops of the windows until he delivered Olive Hanford over to her mother's maid.

"You have more courage than I ever gave you credit for, Tom," said his father, somewhat patronizingly. "There is no doubt but your name will be in the morning papers, and that you will be highly praised for your prompt action and presence of mind. I am glad to see that you were not wanting when the emergency presented itself."

"You acted just like the hero in a story-book, Tom," put in Henry, affably.

"I trust, Thomas, that you will cultivate the acquaintance of the Hanfords," said his stepmother. "They are very rich, and move in our best society."

"I must have done a big thing," grinned Tom, as he went to his room that night, "when it has made such a wonderful change in the home atmosphere."

CHAPTER VI.—Tom Calls on Olive Hanford.

When Tom appeared at the breakfast table next morning he was treated with a degree of consideration that was entirely new to him. Tom was hard at work in his sanctum making a fresh supply of his Lusterine to replace what had been destroyed when Sam Wiley made his appearance.

"Hello, Tom," greeted Sam, "what the dickens have you been up to? You've got your name in the papers as a hero of the first water. Tell me all about it."

"If you've read the morning paper you know as much, or even more, than I do about the affair. What those reporters can't do with a sensational story isn't worth mentioning," laughed Tom.

"If you only had your Lusterine ready now that would be a fine advertisement for you to begin business with," snickered Sam. "Making a fresh supply of it, are you? Got the other lot bottled, I s'pose."

"No, I haven't. The kettleful you saw yesterday is gone to the bow-wows."

"How's that?" asked Sam, in surprise.

"Found it all over the floor when I came up here last evening."

"You did?"

"I did. Somebody got in here while I was away at the ball field, and upset the kettle."

"Suffering saucepans! Is that a fact?" in astonishment.

"That's a fact. Can't you see the stains on the boards?"

Sam saw plainly enough.

"Who could have served you such a scurvy trick as that?"

"Steve Porter! Would he have the nerve to come back here after what you said to him yesterday?"

"It is not impossible."

When Tom Sherwood went into the house to lunch he had five dozen bottles of his Lusterine labeled and standing on a wide bench in front of one of the windows ready to be wrapped up as soon as he got the wrappers from the printer. Sam had been instructed in the mystery of the composition of the polish, and shown how to prepare it. He was an enthusiastic assistant, and a firm believer in its ultimate success as a commercial product. About half-past two Tom left him in charge of the sanctum and went to his room to dress for his visit to the Hanfords.

"You're looking swell, old man," grinned Sam, when he came back to see if his chum wanted any further points before he left. "Got on your Sunday rig, eh?"

"That's right. A fellow has got to look nice when he calls on a pretty girl, especially when she belongs to the upper crust like Olive Hanford," laughed Tom.

"Bet your life," replied Sam. "I always put on my glad rags when I go to see my steady."

"Who's that? Sadie Cobb?"

Sam grinned.

"Well, you can shut up the shop when you get through if I'm not back."

"All right. What'll I do with the key?"

"Hand it to the cook."

Sam said he would and Tom started for Hancock street. When he rang the bell at No. 222, the servant took his name and showed him into the parlor. Presently Olive came tripping downstairs looking as sweet as a box of caramels.

"It's awfully nice of you to call so soon, Mr. Sherwood," said Olive, seating herself beside him.

"It's a great privilege to be permitted to call on such a nice girl as you are," replied Tom, and then he blushed as if astonished at his own nerve.

"You are certainly not a bashful boy," she said. "I am very much obliged to you for the compliment."

"You are welcome," he replied. "I hope you have suffered no ill effects from the excitement of yesterday's fire."

"No. I am all right again, thank you."

Then she hastened to assure Tom of her gratitude for his gallant assistance in her hour of need. At this point Mrs. Hanford entered the parlor. She greeted Tom cordially, and thanked him with much feeling for what he had done for her daughter.

"We hope to number you among our most valued friends hereafter, Mr. Sherwood," she said, with a smile. "I hope you will call on us again before we go to the Catskills for the summer."

"I shall be pleased to do so," replied Tom. "When do you expect to go away?"

"It will probably be three weeks before we can leave Englewood, as most of our summer gowns were destroyed by the fire, and they will have to be replaced."

Shortly afterwards Mrs. Wilson, Olive's aunt, came in, and he was introduced to her. She also had some very nice things to say to him about his courageous conduct at the fire, and how much the family was indebted to him for saving Olive's life. Dinner was served about seven, and Tom enjoyed it very much, especially as Olive sat beside him, and made herself very entertaining. Our hero prolonged his visit until nine o'clock, and then took his leave, promising Olive that he would call on her before she went to the country.

CHAPTER VII.—Tom Starts Out to Create a Demand for the Invincible Lusterine.

Tom had originally decided to make a house-to-house canvass in Englewood with his Lusterine, for the purpose of introducing it at first on a small scale. After further deliberation he came to the conclusion that this way was too slow and unsatisfactory—that it ought to be introduced on a more extensive scale. He resolved to begin operations in Dundee, a neighboring town. There was a large piano factory in Dundee, and Tom determined to interview the manager and see if

he couldn't persuade him to give his Lusterine a trial on the cases. With this purpose in view he purchased a small second-hand suit-case, packed a sample can and a couple of dozen bottles of his polish in it, together with slabs of differently stained woods, shaved thin, showing the results attained by the Invincible Lusterine, and took the train one morning for Dundee. Reaching the factory, he entered the office, which was on the ground floor, and asked to see the manager. He was admitted to the private office.

"Mr. Smith," he began, in a business-like way, "I wish to call your attention to a new wood polish I have lately invented, and which is specially adapted for piano cases. You are using, I suppose, one of the best polishes on the market on your cases, but when you have given my Lusterine a fair test I'll guarantee that you won't want to use any other polish."

The manager of the famous Dundee pianos looked at Tom with an indulgent smile.

"The polish we use is an established brand of the finest French article, and fills the bill so well that we are perfectly satisfied with the results we get from it, and consequently we couldn't think of making any change."

"I do not dispute your statement, sir, but what I do say is this, that my Invincible Lusterine is so far ahead of any French polish manufactured as to be in a class by itself."

Manager Smith favored Tom with a half-incredulous, half-pitying smile.

"Young man, you have a very expansive idea of your Lusterine, as you call it; but I'm afraid you are only wasting my time as well as your own in seeking to boom it here. As I have already said, the polish we use is perfectly satisfactory, and we do not intend to make a change."

"All right, you know your business, sir. However, I should like to show you what my Lusterine is capable of doing. I have a few sample woods in my bag here I hope you will permit me to show you. I am sure you will not refuse me that favor, as I have come all the way from Englewood to exhibit them to you."

"Very well," replied Mr. Smith, a bit impatiently. "I will look at them."

Tom opened his suit-case, and taking out the half-dozen pieces of thin wood stained in different tints, which he had carefully treated with his Lusterine, laid them upon the manager's desk. The gloss upon them fairly dazzled the manager of the piano works. He took them up one by one, and examined them carefully.

"I must admit that yours is a marvelous polish," replied the astonished Mr. Smith. "Do you mean to say that this is your invention?"

"Yes, sir."

"I should like to try it on a sample case, and see if it will produce similar results."

"I was about to propose that, sir. I have brought a tin full of the Lusterine for that purpose. Let one of your men give a piano case two coats of this, according to the directions on the label, and you'll be surprised at the looks of the case. I've already tried it on our piano case at home, and it brought out the original color in an altogether different and improved light."

Tom handed the manager the sample can he had brought with him.

"It isn't necessary for me to say another word

in favor of my Lusterine. The stuff will speak for itself as soon as you give it a chance, much more effectively than I could represent it if I talked all day," said the boy, rising to take his leave. "This is my business card. I shall be glad to hear from you as soon as you have had the chance to test my luster, whether you decide to substitute it for your present polish or not."

"I will write you in a few days on the subject, Mr. Sherwood. Good-day."

"Good-day, sir," and Tom left the manager's office.

The rest of the day the young salesman spent among the furniture dealers of Dundee, demonstrating the superiority of his Lusterine over every other polish in the market. He succeeded in convincing the majority of the furniture houses that his article had merits not to be lightly thrust aside. In each case he left a sample bottle with the firm to be applied to a single article of furniture, said article to be afterwards placed in their show window as an advertisement of the Lusterine if it fulfilled all the claims Tom made for it. In that case a supply of the Invincible Lusterine was to be forwarded on sale.

CHAPTER VIII.—"Porter's Incomparable Luster."

When Tom reached home he found a small package and a letter stamped with an embossed monogram awaiting him. It had been left by one of the Hanford servants, so his stepmother told him. Both she and Henry were exceedingly curious as to the nature of its contents. Tom opened the letter first. It read as follows:

"My Dear Mr. Sherwood: I beg you will accept the accompanying watch and chain from Mr. Hanford and myself, as well as the attached charm from my daughter Olive, as a slight token of our appreciation for your gallant conduct at the fire which resulted in the partial destruction of our home on Lincoln street. With the most heartfelt gratitude to you, I remain,

"Very sincerely yours,
"THOMAS HANFORD."

"Let's see the watch and charm, Tom," asked Henry eagerly.

Tom opened the package and found a neat box inside bearing the imprint of the leading jeweler of Englewood. Removing the cover and a shield of cotton underneath, there was revealed a magnificent gold watch and heavy chain, together with a handsome diamond-encrusted charm. Henry gazed enviously upon the splendid and valuable present his half-brother had received. He owned a pretty little gold watch himself, while Tom heretofore had been favored with only a plain silver one; but this watch, with its engraved inscription, "Presented to Thomas Sherwood, in gratitude for his gallant rescue of Olive Hanford, June 6, 1906," made his own timepiece look like thirty cents.

"It is very handsome," remarked Mrs. Sherwood, taking the watch out of its bed of cotton and examining it. "It is too expensive for you to wear every day, Thomas," she added.

Tom said nothing, but when he carried it up to his room he thought that as the watch was his property he ought to be the best judge of when he should wear it.

"As I am a man of business now, I ought to put on a good front," he remarked to himself. "It is well to impress people with a sense of your importance when you approach them as I have to do to talk up my Invincible Lusterine."

That evening he walked over to Sam's house to tell him about what he had done in Dundee that day.

"You did fine," said Sam, enthusiastically. "Do you think the piano factory will use the Lusterine?"

"I couldn't say, Sam; but if they do it will add a whole lot to the looks of their piano cases."

"Where are you going next, Tom?"

"I shall take a trip to Tuckerton to-morrow, Unionville next day, and Pomona on Saturday. That will about wind up our present supply of Lusterine. Of course, you understand, Sam, that we can't expect any revenue from this introductory output. That is what is bothering me now. I ought to have several gross of Lusterine made up to dispose of in this way.

"That will take money, won't it?" said Sam, with a drop in his countenance, for he had expected that Tom would get paid for every bottle of the luster manufactured.

"I should say it will. And the worst of it is I don't know where I shall get the money from to carry out my new ideas."

"I'm afraid we'll have to go back to your original plan of selling the stuff direct to consumers for a while at least."

"No, I don't want to do that. I want to interest the dealers in its sale, and thus create a steady demand. That is the way to build up a regular business. By and by, when we can afford the expense, I mean to advertise it as extensively as possible. For the present I want to make the thing pan out enough to allow you five dollars a week income when vacation is up, and your mother looks to you for returns."

"How about yourself, Tom?"

"Oh, I'm not worrying about myself. The future will take care of me."

"S'pose we were to get a large order from the piano factory next week, could we fill it? The materials cost money, you know."

"I'd fill it somehow. I shouldn't let anything like that get away from me after working it up. Even if we got the order we couldn't expect the cash right away."

"Why not?" asked Sam, in some surprise.

"Because all responsible firms demand and are accorded a certain margin of credit—30, 60, or 90 days, as the case may be."

"Sizzling saucepans! Is that so?"

"That's so."

"Then where do we come in?"

"We must have a little capital to wrestle with the emergency."

"Where are we going to get it?"

"That's is the problem my gray matter is struggling with."

"And if your gray matter doesn't help you out, what then?"

"Don't ask me too many serious questions all at once, Sam. All I ask you is not to get dis-

couraged. I look to you to help me out with the manufacturing end—the rest I will attend to. I'm going to pull out if I break a leg doing it."

"When are your stepmother and Henry going to the mountains?"

"Next week."

"Then you're going to canvass this town, aren't you?"

"That's what I am."

"You'll need a new supply of the Lusterine."

"We'll have it, if I have to get credit at the stores where I bought my last materials."

"Will the store keepers charge it up to you or to your folks?"

"They'll have to charge it up to me or not at all."

"I wish I had some money to help you out," said Sam, earnestly.

"I did not expect to look to you for any money, Sam."

"But I am not really entitled to an interest in your business unless I put up for it."

"You can pay for your interest one of these days out of your profits."

"That's pretty liberal of you, Tom, considering you're strapped at the very moment you need money to carry this thing on. You could easily sell a half interest in your Lusterine for good money, and put yourself on Easy street right away."

"Probably I could, but I'm not going to. You're the only partner I want, Sam. We've been chums right along all through High School, and now we'll sink or swim together in this business."

"Tom, I'll never forget what you're doing for me. You are a trump."

"Thanks. So are you. Come out and let us take a walk."

They took their way up the main street, occasionally looking in at the show windows as they passed along. Suddenly Sam grabbed his companion by the arm, and drew him up to the window of a small artistic cabinet-maker's store.

"Dancing dervishes! Look there, will you!" he cried, greatly excited.

Tom looked. In the window was a neatly painted card-board sign, standing as a background to a dozen labeled bottles containing a dark-colored liquid. The sign read:

PORTER'S INCOMPARABLE LUSTER
Beware of Imitations!

The only thing of its kind on the market. Only Ten Cents a bottle—three bottles for a quarter. Buy it and try it. Money refunded if not satisfactory. Steven Porter, Inventor and Manufacturer. Danny Mack, General Sales Agent.

CHAPTER IX.—"Stop Thief!"

"Well, what do you think of that?" exclaimed Sam, in a tone of the deepest disgust. "Wouldn't that jar you!"

"Porter's Incomparable Luster, eh?" chuckled Tom. "I wonder what kind of stuff it is? Let's go in and see some samples of what it'll do."

They walked into the shop and came face to face with Steve Porter himself.

"What do you want here?" he asked, with a sardonic grin.

"We don't want to see you, at any rate," replied Tom, coolly.

"Then you'd better get out again," replied Steve, in a nasty tone.

"Are you running this store?" asked Tom.

"What's that to you?"

Tom shoved by him, went up to the counter, and rapped on it.

"What do you want? This is my uncle's store. He's out just now."

"Oh, this is your uncle's store, is it? There's a sign in the window advertising a new furniture polish. I wanted to see what it looks like."

"Jealous, are you, 'cause I've got ahead of you," grinned Steve.

"I'm not worrying about that. Trot out a sample of your polish, and if it's as good as mine I'll take my hat off to you."

"I s'pose you think it isn't?"

"I'm not supposing anything till I see the goods. Show up your Incomparable Luster. Produce a sample of what it can accomplish."

"There it is on that chair," replied Steve complacently.

Tom and his chum immediately looked at the chair in question. It had a fair polish on it, but nothing extraordinary nor different from what could be obtained from any furniture polish on the market.

"Is this a fair sample of your luster?" asked Tom.

"Yes, it is. What's the matter with it?"

Tom looked at Sam, and Sam returned the glance—then both grinned broadly. Steve got his back up at once.

"Came in here to make fun of it, did you?" he snarled. "You'd better get out."

"No, we're not making fun of the polish. We're only thinking about your nerve in calling that shine an Incomparable Luster, when it's only a plain, everyday polish."

"It's better than your old stuff, at any rate," cried Steve, angrily.

"How do you know it is?"

"I know it is."

"We haven't put a drop of it on sale in this town yet, so how do you happen to be so well informed?"

"That's my business."

"Then I suppose it was you who got into my workshop after I told you to keep away, and upset that kettleful of my Lusterine."

"Who says I did?" demanded Steve, aggressively.

"Well, I say so, if you want to know."

"You're a liar if you say I did any such thing," blustered Steve.

"Thanks. You're a gentleman, I don't think."

"Did you come in here to insult me?"

"No; we came in here to see your Incomparable Luster," grinned Tom.

"I want to know by what right you say I entered your work-shop."

"Well, you borrowed some keys from the locksmith in the street below my house, and you used one of those keys to unlock the door of my room."

"I didn't do no such thing."

"You upset the stuff that was in the kettle on your clothes."

"It's a lie, I tell you."

"The locksmith told me that when you brought back the keys you borrowed your clothes were all spattered with a composition resembling my Lusterine."

"He told you a lie."

"All right. We'll let it go at that. You know whether you're guilty or not."

"I wish you'd get out of here."

"We're going, as we've found out all we want to know. If I was you I wouldn't try to fool the public with that furniture polish. You are putting up claims that you can't make good, and may get into trouble."

"You go to grass. I know my business."

"Maybe you do, but I doubt it," replied Tom, as he and Sam walked toward the door.

"Yaw!" snorted Steve after them. "Don't come in here again."

"I won't until I come in to show your uncle what my Lusterine is like, and get him to advertise it in his window in place of your incomparable fraud."

"Don't you dare to do that," yelled Steve, dancing about the store like a wild Indian. "He wouldn't have anything to do with your old stuff."

"He will if he consults his own interests. I'm going to put my Lusterine into every furniture store in town."

With that parting shot Tom and his friend Sam walked out of the cabinet-maker's store, leaving Steve Porter wild with rage. Tom went to Tuckerville on the following day, and succeeded in getting most of the furniture stores to put his Lusterine on sale after he had shown what it would do. He was unable to leave more than two bottles of the luster at each place, owing to his limited supply.

Similar results attended his trips to Unionville on Friday and Pomona on Saturday.

"No use talking," he said to himself, on his way home from the latter place. "We've got to make a bigger supply if I'm going to do business. The dealers are all taking kindly to it, and they wouldn't do that unless they saw something in it."

But a bigger supply couldn't be produced without money or credit for the time being. On Monday of the following week Mrs. Sherwood and Henry departed for the summer resort they had selected. Tom, much to his surprise, was invited to go along with them, but he politely declined on the plea of prior arrangements. Henry tried to discover what those arrangements were, but did not succeed. Mrs. Sherwood had an idea that perhaps Mrs. Hanford and her daughter had invited him to accompany them to the Catskills. Tom succeeded in procuring enough raw material on credit to manufacture a sufficient supply of his luster to enable him to put the stuff on sale throughout Englewood. He also stood the printer up for a hundred show cards to put into the windows.

He didn't bother visiting Steve Porter's uncle, as he didn't care to chance another run-in with Steve himself. He found out that Steve had visited the principal stores ahead of him in an effort to get them to handle his polish, but was not

successful even at one place, as his luster had no particular merits to attract notice to itself. While visiting a small cabinet-maker's shop in the residential section, Tom ran across Steve and his side partner, Danny Mack, making a house-to-house canvass with the incomparable Luster. They both gave him black looks, and would have attacked him if they had dared. When he came out of the shop he found them standing on the other side of the street. Instead of continuing their canvass they started to follow him wherever he went, much to his annoyance. He wondered what they were up to, but of course could not tell what their object was in dogging his steps.

"I s'pose they want to see where I go. They're welcome to. I don't believe it will do them any good."

Tom took in as many more places, all small shops, as he had bottles of Lusterine to supply. At all such shops he sold from one to three bottles outright at a discount for cash, and left a show card with each. The retail price of his Lusterine was 25 cents—the wholesale, 15 cents. Having sold out entirely, and with about \$6 in his pocket, half of which was profit, Tom started for home. As he was crossing a certain street a carriage whizzed past, and a small package dropped out of it almost at his feet. Tom picked it up, shouted to the driver, and as he paid no attention, started to give chase to the vehicle in order to return the package, which he saw had no name or address on it. The moment he did so Steve Porter and Danny Mack, who saw the whole thing, started after him yelling "Stop Thief!" at the ton of their voices.

Their cries, as a matter of course, attracted immediate attention, and people on the sidewalk turned and looked after Tom. Several joined Steve and Danny in the pursuit. Tom was so intent on overtaking the carriage that he was not aware of the growing excitement behind him. Seeing the vehicle slow up to let a car pass at the next corner, he put on a fresh burst of speed, but it dashed on again before he could catch it. Steve was not much of a runner, and his friend Danny soon distanced him and pushed his way to the front of the people who had joined in the chase of the unsuspecting boy. The excitement grew apace as another block was covered by pursuers and pursued.

"Stop thief!" roared Danny Mack again and again as he led the crowd that followed close on the boy's heels.

A policeman standing on the corner immediately joined in the chase. It was a strenuous moment for Tom Sherwood.

CHAPTER X.—What Was in the Package Tom Found.

An electric car came dashing down the street at that moment, and as Tom was beginning to realize that he would never be able to overtake the carriage on foot, he made a dash for the car, boarded it with a jump, and was whisked off at a rapid pace. The conductor was inside collecting a fare at the time, and Tom passed

rapidly by him and stepped out on the platform where the motorman stood.

"I've picked up a package which was dropped by some one in yonder carriage. I'm trying to catch up with it. Don't you think you could put on a little extra speed for half a block or so?"

"Sure," replied the motorman, and he let her out another notch.

The car bounded ahead at a faster pace, leaving Tom's pursuers hopelessly in the rear, and the fun of it all was that the boy never dreamed that he had been chased. Tom now had great hopes of overtaking the carriage when, as the next corner was approached, the conductor rang the bell to stop the car.

"That settles it," said the boy, as he saw the carriage turn up the street. "I must trust to my legs again."

But he was now down in the crowded business section, and he found that he could not make sufficient headway to reach the fast-disappearing carriage, so he was compelled to give up the pursuit and continue on home. Sam, who had gone out on a house-to-house tour with a supply of Lusterine, had not yet returned when Tom went up to his sanctum. So our hero sat down near his work-bench and unwrapped the bundle to see if he could find inside any clew to the rightful owner. The bundle contained twenty \$1,000 coupon Government four-per-cent. bonds.

"Gee whiz! What a find! And not a scrap of information to show who they belong to. When the owner discovers his loss I'll bet he'll pull his hair out by the roots. I must show them to father and ask his advice in the matter."

Just then Sam came bustling in empty-handed. "I've sold every bottle, Tom," he cried gleefully. "Twenty bottles at 25 cents a bottle is \$5, and here is the coin to prove it."

He slapped down a handful of silver on the bench.

"How did you make out yourself?" he added. "First-class. I've brought back \$6. You made the most profit, as you got the retail price. I disposed of all but two bottles for 15 cents each."

"Six and five are eleven," counted Sam. "Let me see what our profit is this afternoon."

He figured up and found that it amounted to \$6.50.

"If we could do that every day we could keep the ball rolling in great shape," he said, enthusiastically.

"I expect we shall make ten times that amount in a day when we get the business in good running shape."

"Ten times!" gasped Sam, his eyes protruding with wonder.

"Sure. Why not? By and by everybody will want Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine. We'll have the monopoly of its sale. Everybody'll have to come to see us; by us I mean our jobbers and agents, for it, and consequently the money will roll in on us like the water over the falls of Niagara. We'll have our factory, of which you'll be the superintendent; our busy shipping department, our bookkeepers, advertising manager, cashier, stenographers—in fact, we'll have a whole army of employees, all drawing good wages and taking their hats off to us."

"That would be fine if it came true."

"Came true! Why, of course it'll come true."

"I wish I could think so."

"I've made up my mind to make it come true. That's the only way to get there. I'm going to have a fat bank account at the First National long before I get bald-headed."

"And I suppose you'll marry Olive Hanford and live happy ever after," snickered Sam.

"I don't know about that part of it," blushed Tom. "She might not have me, you know."

"Oh, she'll have you fast enough if you pile up the dough."

"I shouldn't want her if I thought it was only a question of money."

"Well, the girls all seem to have their eyes skinned for the money these days. Hello, what's those documents you have in your hand?"

"These documents are United States Government bonds."

"Go on. What are you giving me?" replied Sam, incredulously.

"Don't you believe what I say? Just take a look."

"Gee! They are for fair. Where did you get such a lot of 'em?"

"Picked them up in the street."

"You did what?"

"Picked them up, I tell you."

"Do you mean that?"

"I do."

"My gracious! What are they worth?"

"Twenty thousand dollars."

"And you found them in the street! What are you going to do with them?"

"Find their owner, of course, and return them."

Tom then recounted to his chum how he had come by the package which contained the bonds.

"You had a strenuous time of it trying to overtake that carriage. How do you expect to find the owner of the bonds?"

"I expect they will be advertised for at once."

"You ought to get a reward for returning them."

"If any is offered I shan't refuse it. We need the money in our business."

"He'd be a pretty mean man that wouldn't give you something decent."

"What do you call decent?"

"Well, I should say that \$100 is the least you ought to expect."

"I'd be glad to get a hundred. It would come in mighty handy now."

"Would you really put as much as that into your Lusterine business?"

"Well, say, I'd slap a thousand in if I had it."

"A hundred would put us on our feet, I guess."

"It would help to keep things moving."

"I s'pose I'd better get around early to-morrow, as I've got some more of the polish to make."

"That's right."

"You haven't heard from the piano firm yet, have you?"

"No."

"Most time, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"I hope they send us an order."

"I hope so, too, for if we should get that company to use the Lusterine the chances are good for getting more piano manufacturers in line. That would give you more business than you

could handle alone, Sam. I'd have to hire an assistant for you."

"But if you had to give them all credit for thirty, sixty or ninety days, as you say is the custom, besides selling the stuff to them at a reduced rate, on account of their taking a quantity, why, I don't see how——"

"Don't worry. We shall probably have a few dollars in the treasury by the time we get such a rush of trade as that."

"Well, good-night. I'll see you in the morning."

Sam departed, while Tom shut up shop and went into the house.

"Your pa has gone to see your ma," said the maid, meeting him in the hall.

"Oh, he has. He didn't say anything to me about going."

"He came home about two, dressed himself and said he was in a hurry to catch the three o'clock train. There are three letters for you in the dining-room."

Tom rushed down to get them. Two were from Dundee dealers who wanted a supply of the Lusterine to put on regular sale. The third, to Tom's intense delight, was from the manager of the Dundee Piano Company. Mr. Smith said that the Invincible Lusterine had proved to be eminently satisfactory, and that he wished to see Mr. Thomas Sherwood as soon as possible with a view of making a contract for a year's supply of the polish.

CHAPTER XI.—Mr. Hanford Advises Tom.

"Business is beginning to boom," grinned Tom, who was now feeling like a bird. "A year's supply! I suppose I'll have to do some figuring. Mr. Smith will want rock-bottom figures. Well, seeing that he can't get the Lusterine nor its equal anywhere but from us, I think I can afford to demand a decent price. At any rate, I don't mean to give it away just for the sake of securing a big order. We're out for the dough just the same as Mr. Smith is."

As his father was away, Tom of course couldn't consult him about the bonds he had found, so he decided to go around and see Mr. Hanford. He found that gentleman at home.

"I'm glad to see you Mr. Sherwood," he said, when Tom was shown into the sitting-room upstairs, where he also found Olive and her mother.

Mrs. Hanford and her daughter expressed the pleasure they felt at seeing the boy again.

"I came especially to see you about a package of United States Government bonds I picked up on the street to-day," said Tom to the banker.

"Indeed," replied Mr. Hanford in surprise.

"Here they are, sir," continued the boy, producing the package and taking out the bonds. "There are twenty of them of the denomination of \$1,000 each. There was not the slightest clew to their owner on the package. I wish you'd advise me how I had best proceed in order to restore them to the right party."

Mr. Hanford looked the bonds over.

"I see these are 4's of 1925, and are worth to-day \$1,320 each. The whole bunch represents a total, therefore, of \$26,400—a matter of some

importance to the person who lost them. Tell me the circumstances of the case."

Tom immediately explained how they came into his possession.

"Well, leave the bonds with me and I will take measures to discover the person who lost them."

"All right, sir. I am glad to get them off my hands, as I am pretty busy at present."

"Busy!" exclaimed the banker, regarding his young visitor inquisitively, while Mrs. Hanford and Olive both looked at Tom in some surprise. "Why, this is your vacation time. I suppose," he added with a smile, "you are busy having a good time."

"Well, sir," grinned Tom, "if you call trying to build a business up for yourself having a good time you're right."

"Trying to build a business up for yourself! I don't quite catch your meaning. I heard that you were going to the Dunwoodie Academy this fall."

"My father intends to send me there, but I'm not sure that I shall go."

"Why not?"

"Because I am satisfied in a business project that I am determined to put through."

Mr. Hanford did not seem to regard this explanation very favorably.

"You are young to think of embarking in business," he said. "What is this business, and what put the idea into your head?"

Tom saw that he would have to make a full statement of his Lusterine plans if he expected to satisfy the banker's doubts regarding the propriety of his present undertaking. He was also afraid he might lose Olive's good opinion unless he could set himself right with her, too. So he began at the beginning and told how he had accidentally discovered the secret of making a wood polish that had proved to be superior to anything before the public; how he had determined to introduce it on the market, and what he had already done toward that end, with his success up to that moment. His auditors listened to his story with a great deal of interest.

"You certainly have great ambition to get on in the world, and plenty of push and energy to back it up," said Mr. Hanford when Tom had concluded. "You haven't let any grass grow under your feet in this matter, that's plain to be seen. I should like to see some of the results of your remarkable polish. It must be something above the ordinary to interest the manager of the Dundee Piano Works. Still I cannot say that I approve of you making a business of this thing yet. You should finish your education before you turn your thoughts seriously to business. I would suggest that you lease your discovery to some big firm that manufactures polish, and let them pay you a royalty on their sales. That would relieve you of all the trouble and embarrassment of building up a new business at a time of life when you ought to be at school, and doubtless would in time secure to you a considerable income."

This was wise and well-meant advice on the banker's part, but Tom was too enthusiastic over his Lusterine to enthuse along those lines. His heart and soul was wrapped up in pushing the business of manufacturing and selling his Invincible Lusterine to a successful conclusion, and

boy-like, he chafed at the idea of allowing others to do that interesting thing for him. Politeness, however, induced him to thank Mr. Hanford for his suggestions, and to say that he would think the matter over. In reality, though, he had not the slightest intention of reconsidering the line of action he had marked out for himself. He did not believe in dividing his profits with strangers, at least not as long as he and Sam could control the situation. He spent the evening with the Hanfords, particularly in Olive's society, who played and sang in a charming manner for his entertainment.

"Mamma and I will leave town in a week for the Catskills," she said, when she had accompanied him to the front door. "Auntie is going with us, too. I hope you will call specially on me before we go. Now will you?"

Of course Tom promised that he would call. He couldn't think of refusing such a charming girl, in whom he was already beginning to take a strong interest. Next morning he invested all the capital in the treasury in additional raw material for Sam to transform into Lusterine. When his chum appeared he showed him the letter he had received from the manager of the piano works. Sam, of course, was tickled to death.

"You're going down there to-day, I suppose?" he said.

"Sure thing—this morning."

"How much do you think they'll use in a year?"

"I couldn't tell you. Mr. Smith will tell me about how many gallons when I see him. I'm going to charge a price that'll allow us a decent profit."

"Do you think I'll be able to make it fast enough to supply them?"

"Sure you will, if you work steadily, and more, too. Besides, it'll be easy to get another gas stove and another copper kettle. Then you'll be able to turn out twice as much."

"We'll have to have some gallon and half-gallon tins made for us, and probably some larger bottles. We'll need larger labels and lots of things as our trade increases."

"You can bet we will. However, we ought to pull out, as we're under no expense at present except for the bottles and raw materials."

An hour later Tom took a train which stopped at Dundee, and by half-past ten he was in Mr. Smith's private office figuring on a year's supply of his Lusterine for the piano factory, so much to be furnished on the first of every month. Tom finally arranged to quote him a spot cash figure, express prepaid to the factory, and entered into an agreement to guarantee delivery of the stuff each month. He then made the round of all the furniture houses he had canvassed on his first visit to the town and took orders for a dozen or a half-dozen bottles from a number of them. He also found time to look the situation up in Unionville and secured two small orders in that town. He could do nothing more that day and returned to Englewood by the four o'clock train.

CHAPTER XII.—Tom Comes into \$1,000.

A note was awaiting Tom at his house from Mr. Hanford. The banker said that the owner of

the bonds had been found and the securities restored to him. He had advertised for them in the morning's paper, offering \$1,000 reward for their return to his home. He had given Mr. Hanford his check for that amount, and the banker was ready to pay the money over in cash to Tom.

"One thousand dollars!" exclaimed the boy, hardly believing the evidence of his eyes. "Great Cæsar! Can it actually be true that I'm to get one thousand dollars?"

He read the note over again. Yes, there it was down in black and white in the banker's own handwriting—one thousand dollars. Tom let out a whoop that startled the maid servant, who was setting the table for the boy's supper, he being the only member of the family at home.

"What's the matter, Master Tom?" she asked, with a giggle. "Are you often taken that way?"

"Not often, Minnie; but I guess you'd feel like letting off steam if somebody was to suddenly make you a present of a thousand dollars."

"Land's sake! Has somebody died and left you that much?" she asked.

"No, Minnie; but I found a package worth \$26,000 yesterday, and the gentleman was so glad to get it back that he left \$1,000 as a present for me with a friend of mine."

"My goodness! You're a rich boy, aren't you?"

"Oh, a thousand dollars isn't so much."

"It's a lot of money for a boy like you to have. I suppose you'll put it in the savings bank. I wish I had a thousand dollars."

"Save your money, Minnie, and you'll have a thousand by the time you get married."

The girl giggled again and resumed her work, while Tom rushed to the carriage-house to show the note to Sam, who hadn't gone home yet.

For the next ten minutes there was high jinks in the workroom.

"That money will help us put the Lusterine on its feet," said Tom.

Then he told Sam about the contract he had closed with the manager of the piano factory.

"It's cash, too. No waiting thirty, sixty or ninety days, but spot cash on delivery of the goods."

"Glory hallelujah!" shouted Sam.

"To-morrow I shall buy a new gas stove and another kettle; also a good supply of raw material, order more printing and pay all our debts. I'll have to get a day book, a cash book and a ledger. I must move my desk in here, too. I'll open an account at the Bee-Hive Savings Bank."

"I think Steve Porter would have a fit if he knew we were getting on so fine."

"I guess he would. He hates me like fun," said Tom.

"He won't make anything out of that fake preparation he's got. The only store that has it on sale is his uncle's."

"And I'll bet his uncle will be after mine as soon as he hears about it."

The two boys then began to build a few castles in the air upon the future of Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine. Next morning Tom called at the First National Bank and was shown into the president's private room. His interview with Mr. Hanford was brief, and when he came out he had ten crisp \$100 bills in his pocket. He went

at once to the Bee-Hive Savings Bank and deposited nine of them, retaining one for his present expenses in connection with his polish. He laid in a fresh stock of bottles, which he obtained at the Englewood Glass works.

They were a part of a lot of rejected bottles which had been left on the company's hands, and which Tom got cheap in lots to suit himself. He spoke for the whole number on this occasion, about ten gross, or 1,440 bottles. He had one gross delivered at once to hold the Lusterine Tom had made the previous day. Then he purchased a small job-lot of one-gallon tin cans and had them sent to his house. He ordered large labels to fit them, also an additional supply of show cards to take away on his next trip, and paid the printer.

That day Sam made more than enough Lusterine to fill the first month's order of the piano works. He put it up in the gallon cans, and Tom only waited for the new labels and wrappers to have it ready for shipment. A second gas stove was introduced into the shop, as Sam called it, and a second copper kettle procured for it, thus doubling the productive capacity of the firm. Tom then started out for the city of Buffalo, with his grip loaded with sample bottles of the Lusterine. He was gone two days on this trip, and when he got back home his father wanted to know where he had been and what Sam Wiley was so busy about in the carriage-house during his absence.

"Oh, Sam and I are running a little business scheme, that's all," replied Tom. "I've invented a new furniture polish and have taken Sam into partnership. He makes the stuff and I drum up trade for it."

"So this is the way you are amusing yourselves during your vacation, is it?" replied his father, sarcastically. "What is the name of this great polish, if I may ask?"

"Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine."

"Have you sold any yet?" grinned his father.

"Yes, sir. I have a contract for a year's supply with the Dundee Piano Works. That isn't so bad for a starter."

"You have what?" almost gasped Mr. Sherwood, looking hard at his son.

Tom repeated his statement.

"Show me your copy of the contract."

"Certainly, sir," replied the boy, going up to his room and bringing the document back with him.

Practically it was merely an agreement on the part of the piano firm to take so many quarts of "Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine" per month for the space of one year, at a specified price per quart, payable C. O. D., as a regular contract with a minor was not binding in law. It was signed by the manager.

"Pray, young man, who is going to carry out this agreement after you go to the Dunwoodie Academy—your friend Sam Wiley?"

This was a question Tom didn't want to answer, but his father's eyes were on him and he couldn't wriggle out of it.

"Well, sir," replied the boy, diplomatically, "that is a question to be considered when the time comes."

"It's my opinion you'll get tired of this tom-fool business long before your vacation is over,"

said Mr. Sherwood, dismissing the subject, much to his son's relief.

"If he knew how far I was in the business up to this date it would rather astonish him," thought Tom, as he carried his memorandum of agreement back to his room.

CHAPTER XIII.—A Midnight Capture.

"Well," said Sam Wiley, when he showed up promptly at eight o'clock next morning, "what sort of luck did you have in Buffalo?"

"Oh, pretty good. I managed to interest a dozen houses in the Lusterine. I left samples with them to try. In case they decided to put it on sale I'll hear from them shortly. I sold six bottles to the hotel I stopped at for the full retail price. That reduced my bill."

"I've kept right at the manufacturing end, and have got all those gallon cans you see under the bench filled and labeled. I sent off the Dundee Piano Works' first order, and there's the express company's receipt," said Sam, pointing to a hook near Tom's desk.

"You've been doing well, Sam. I've got an order in the mail from Unionville and two from Pomona. I've also got a post card from the Englewood Furniture Manufacturing Company. The head of the house wants to see me. I wouldn't be surprised but we'll get a large order from them. They make a big line of desks and other office furniture."

"I guess they could use more than the Dundee firm, don't you think?"

"Sure thing."

"We're doing fine for the short time we've been in business."

"That's because we're putting out an article that has real merit."

"By the way, I forgot to tell you that Steve Porter and Danny Mack were hanging around outside your fence for an hour yesterday afternoon."

"They were, eh?"

"Yes. I saw Porter point twice to the carriage house."

"They're up to some trick. We must be on our guard."

Tom shipped off the orders he had on file and then walked up to the office of the Englewood Furniture Manufacturing Company. He had an interview with the head of the firm, which resulted in a standing order for several cans of Lusterine per week, a statement to be rendered on the first of each month, payment to be made on the tenth. That evening he visited Olive Hanford and had a first-class time. She, her mother and aunt were going away next day. He had intended to leave before ten, but time passed so quickly and enjoyable with the two young people that the clock actually struck eleven before he had made a move.

"My goodness!" he exclaimed. "I've overstepped the bounds, I'm afraid, Miss Olive. I had no idea it was so late."

"Oh, well, this is a special occasion, you know," laughed the girl. "You won't see me again for all of two months."

"May I write to you while you are away?" he asked, eagerly.

"Certainly you may if you care to."

"Will you answer my letters?"

"Of course I will but I'm afraid they'll be so uninteresting that——"

"Your letters are sure to interest me," he interrupted, hastily.

"How can you say that before you have seen one of them?" she said, with a smile.

"No matter; I'll take the chances."

It was a quarter past eleven before Tom finally tore himself away from the fair girl and started for home. As he approached his front gate in the shade of the long line of trees which fringed both sides of the streets he noticed a couple of figures slouching along ahead of him. Whoever they were, they did not seem to be aware of his presence. Their actions were so suspicious that Tom kept his eyes on them.

"Geewillikens! If they haven't entered our yard," he exclaimed, suddenly.

He hastened his steps and admitted himself by the main gate. Then he rushed lightly across the lawn toward the yard. The two figures he had seen outside were now standing under the shadow of the carriage-house looking up at Tom's work-room.

"Who are they, and what the deuce are they up to?" muttered the boy, who had halted under a convenient tree.

There was no moon, but it was a bright enough night for the actions of the intruders to be easily made out, although Tom did not immediately recognize them. After consulting together the pair of interlopers started off around the carriage-house and presently reappeared with the ladder, which they raised to one of the windows of Tom's sanctum.

"That settles it," breathed the watcher. "Their object is to get into that room. It's time for me to take a hand in this game."

When he and Sam shut up for the night they had closed the windows as a precautionary measure. Tom thought now that it was lucky they had done so, for entrance could not be effected that way unless the rascals broke a pane so they could get at the catch on the inside. Only one of the fellows went up the ladder at first, but when he tried the window and found it secure he called his companion up to look at it. The second chap struck a match to see what it was that held the window, and the flame lighted up their faces for a moment. Tom recognized them as Steve Porter and Danny Mack.

"Well, if they haven't a nerve!" muttered Tom, angrily. "I've a great mind to let them get in and then have them arrested as burglars. They need a good lesson to teach them to keep away from this place."

Satisfied that the window could not be opened without forcing, they descended to the ground and moved the ladder to the other window.

"They won't have any better luck there," grinned Tom to himself.

As Steve and Danny went up the ladder again an idea occurred to Sherwood. He crossed rapidly behind the unsuspecting young rascals, and rushing to the ladder, grabbed the lower rung and jerked it to one side. The ladder toppled over and the upper end fell to the ground, car-

rying Steve and Danny with it. Both yelled murder as they struck the ground, and before either could rise Tom was upon them. Danny tried to make his escape, but Sherwood got hold of him by the collar, and throwing him down again straddled him. Steve made no effort to get away, but lay groaning as if in great pain. It happened that a policeman was passing down the street at the time and the racket attracted his notice. He entered the yard and soon made out the scene of the trouble. He had his night-stick in his hand and was ready for business.

"What's going on here?" he asked, laying his hand on Tom's shoulder.

"These two chaps were trying to force an entrance into our carriage-huse," replied Tom. "You'd better take charge of them."

"What's your name?" asked the officer.

"Tom Sherwood. This is my home."

"Let that chap up. I'll take care of him."

Tom got off of Danny and the policeman yanked him to his feet.

"Let me go," expostulated Mack. "I ain't done nothin'."

"What are you doing on these grounds at this time of the night?"

"Nothin'."

"You see that ladder on the ground, officer? Well, they brought it from behind the carriage-house, where we kept it when it's not in use, and had it planted under one of those windows. They were both up there trying to see if they couldn't get into my workshop when I ran up, jerked the ladder aside and spilled them upon the ground. I'm afraid the other chap is hurt. I know them both. That is Danny Mack you've got hold of. The other is Steve Porter. If they will promise to keep away in future I'm willing you should let them go."

"I don't know about that," replied the policeman. "This is a serious piece of business they have been engaged in. They'll have to give an explanation at the station. Come, young fellow," to Porter, "get up or I'll tickle you with my stick."

"Oh, I can't," groaned Steve. "I believe my arm is broken."

"Serves you right if it is. You're pretty young to be engaged in crooked work."

"Oh, oh, oh!" whimpered Porter.

Tom struck a match, and by its light he saw that Steve was as pale as a sheet, and his moans showed that he had suffered some injury.

"Maybe his arm is broken," said Sherwood. "What shall we do with him? There is a doctor in the house across the street. We'd better take him there, hadn't we?"

"Hold this chap while I look at that fellow," said the officer.

Danny tried to take advantage of the situation to break away from Tom, but he was not successful.

"I'll get even with you if you don't let me go," he said vindictively.

"If you talk in that strain I'll put you through," replied Tom disgustedly.

"You can't prove nothin' ag'in us," retorted Danny defiantly.

"You meant to break into my workshop."

"We didn't mean no such thing."

"Why did you come here, then?"

"None of your business."

"All right. Perhaps you'll find out that it is my business to protect my own property."

In the meantime the policeman had been investigating the injury suffered by Steve Porter and while he was doing it Steve fainted dead away from the pain.

"His arm does seem to be broken," said the officer. "I'll carry him across the street. If the other chap gives you any trouble I'll give him a rap with my club."

That threat cowed Danny Mack, and he allowed Tom to lead him along after the officer and his burden. The policeman roused the doctor up and he came downstairs to look at the patient. His verdict settled all doubt on the subject—Steve's arm was broken. The injured boy was carried into the doctor's dining-room, where his arm was set and bandaged up before he regained consciousness.

"I don't care to prosecute these fellows," said Tom to the policeman.

"You have no right to refuse to do so," was the reply. "It will make trouble for you."

"I think you'd better call it off," suggested Sherwood. "Porter is punished enough, for he'll be laid up for a while and have a chance to repent. As for Mack, I think the scare he's had ought to prove a lesson for him. I don't like to send them to jail. It might ruin their future."

The officer finally agreed to fall in with Tom's view, and after giving Danny a serious call-down he allowed him to go. As for Steve the doctor said he'd better remain at his house till morning. Tom then went home and the policeman continued on his beat.

CHAPTER XIV.—Mr. Sherwood Puts in His Oar.

"Now, Sam," said Tom a week later, "we've got a reasonably good supply of the Lusterine made up, and as we have received several orders from Buffalo I'm going on a longer trip this time."

"I'm going to put another day in at Buffalo, then I'm going on to Dunkirk, from there to Erie, then to Painesville, Ohio, where there's a furniture factory on a large scale, thence to Cleveland, Sandusky and Toledo. From the latter place I shall head direct to Chicago, where I expect to put in a week."

"Gee! Going to do things up brown, aren't you?"

"I'm bent on getting this business in good running shape before the end of our vacation, so that if my father insists on me giving it up I'll move my duds and our factory somewhere else and let him kick all by himself. He has neglected me too long for me to allow him to put his oar in against my interests now."

"But he's your natural guardian, and has the law with him."

"I don't care if he is. If he'd been more of a father to me I should look at matters in a different light. I'd take him into my confidence, let him supervise this business while I was at school so it would be in good shape when I came to take hold of it permanently. But as things are I don't care to be under any obligations to

him, even if he offered to see me through, which I know he wouldn't. My stepmother would chip in anyway the moment she saw there was a good prospect of my getting ahead of Henry. I've been treated as a side-issue too long. Now I'm going to assert myself at any cost. I'll turn this business over to you to run before I'll let my father break it up, and then I'd keep out on the road where he couldn't reach me. I can trust you, Sam; that's why I took you in with me."

Tom packed his grip with such clothes and other things as he was likely to need during his trip, and in the second-hand suit-case he stowed as many sample bottles of his Lusterine as he could conveniently carry.

"I've enough in the case to last me through Erie, I guess," he said to Sam. "You must send me four dozen bottles by express to Cleveland; two dozen to Sandusky, and three dozen to Toledo. I'll call for the packages at the express offices. Then I will want a much larger quantity sent on to Chicago—say eight dozen bottles and a dozen of the gallon cans. I will write you when to forward them."

"What'll I tell your father when he asks where you are?"

"I'm going to leave a note for him, in which, however, I shan't specify my route. He won't say anything to you."

"He might insist on closing up this place. What then?"

"In that case hire a room somewhere suitable for the business and remove all our paraphernalia and stock in trade. Then arrange with the post-office to have the carrier deliver our mail to the new address. I'm going to leave you \$100."

"All right," replied his partner.

That afternoon Tom started for Buffalo. When Mr. Sherwood got home and read the note his son had left for him he was very angry. He went out to the carriage-house and interviewed Sam Wiley. He was rather surprised at the business air of the room, for he had never been up there since Tom had taken possession of the premises.

"I don't approve of this sort of business at all," he began, as he noted the rows of labeled bottles, the cases of empties, the labeled cans, the two gas stoves, the copper kettles and all the other things connected with the manufacture of the Invincible Lusterine. "You boys ought to be enjoying yourselves during your vacation days instead of working as if you were grown men."

"We enjoy this work because we're building up a business for ourselves," said Sam respectfully.

"Building up a business," sniffed Mr. Sherwood, rather scornfully. "Poppcock! When my son is through with his schooling I will see that he gets a clerkship in a suitable business."

"I should think you'd prefer him to have a business of his own, instead of having him work for somebody else," replied Sam.

"A business of his own," snorted Mr. Sherwood. "How could a boy of his age conduct any business successfully?"

"He seems to be conducting this Lusterine business in fine shape. Why, we——"

"Lusterine humbug!" exclaimed Mr. Sherwood.

"He's only making a fool of himself. When he comes back to-morrow, or next day, I shall insist that he give this ridiculous nonsense up. He can turn it over to you, if you have the time and inclination to carry it on; but you will have to remove these things elsewhere. I can't have my carriage-house lumbered up with them."

"I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to carry this business on, sir. I can manufacture that Lusterine all right and attend to the shipping of the stuff, but as to introducing it on the market I'm not smart enough for that. Tom knows just how to do it. We've only been running this thing for three weeks and he has got a good bit of trade already. He's drummed this town up and we've got a standing order from the Englewood Furniture Manufacturing Company. We've a year's contract with the Dundee Piano Works. We've got orders from Unionville, Tuckersville and Pomona, besides several orders, with prospects of many more, from Buffalo."

"One would imagine my son intended to make a permanent thing of this Lusterine business," replied Mr. Sherwood, sarcastically.

"That's his intention."

"It is, hey? Well, I won't have it. I'm his father, and he'll do as I say, I guess. He's going to the Dunwoodie Academy this fall, and after that I will select the business he is to follow."

"Were you thinking of having him go into your hardware business?"

"No, I was not," snapped Mr. Sherwood. "Henry will learn my business and eventually become my partner."

"But Tom is your eldest son."

"I will provide for him in a suitable manner in my will."

"Since you don't intend to give him an interest in your business, why don't you let him build this business up for himself?"

"Because I don't choose to let him waste his time."

"You might give him a trial, at any rate. You don't know how smart he is. Why, I think he's got more push and energy in his little finger than some men have in their whole body."

Mr. Sherwood smiled incredulously.

"Tom is only an inexperienced boy," he said.

"If I had \$1,000 to bet I'd back Tom to win out in anything he undertook."

"Have you two made any money out of this Lusterine yet?" said Mr. Sherwood abruptly.

"No, sir. We don't expect to make money until we get the business established."

"Well, let me tell you right now, Wiley, if there's any more establishing done it will have to be done by you or somebody other than my son. When he comes back from his idiotic trip he's got to quit. I shall take him to his mother in the mountains to pass the rest of his vacation. He shall go up with me on Saturday."

"He won't be some by Saturday, sir."

"He won't, eh?" Where has he gone?"

"He went to Buffalo this afternoon."

"How long did he intend to stay there?"

"Not over a day, I think."

"Then he should be home day after to-morrow."

"He's not coming back here, sir, till he's canvassed the furniture houses of Chicago."

"Chicago!" roared Mr. Sherwood. "I'll put a

stop to this thing at once. I'll telegraph him to come home directly. What hotel is he to stop at?"

"The Lake House, sir."

Mr. Sherwood wrote it down.

"In the meantime you'd better remove all this stuff somewhere else," he said to Sam.

"Do you mean that, sir?"

"I certainly do."

"Very well, sir. I'll look up another place and have everything carted away."

Satisfied that he had accomplished his point, Mr. Sherwood retired to his house, and after dinner he sent a peremptory telegram to Tom to return home at once.

CHAPTER XV.—On the Road.

Tom, however, did not receive his father's telegram. After arriving at Buffalo he put up at the Sheldon Hotel instead of the Lake House, as he had originally intended, and in the morning he started out to go over his previous route in order to see what success his Lusterine was having. After calling at half a dozen places and picking up a couple of orders, he entered one large establishment on Blank street, where the head of the firm had expressed a very favorable opinion of his polish from the samples he had shown on his first trip. He was admitted to the private office after a short delay.

"We have given your polish a practical test," said the head partner, "and we are satisfied it is just what we want. Our factory, however, is at Cincinnati, and it will be necessary for you to go there and see our superintendent. Can you do that?"

"Yes, sir, if I am sure of getting an order that will warrant it."

"I can guarantee that you will get a large order if you do not figure too high. I will give you a letter to deliver personally to Mr. Green, our superintendent."

The letter was written and handed to Tom, who then visited a few other furniture houses, and after dinner took a train for Cincinnati direct. Before he left, however, he wrote a letter to Sam telling of the change in his arrangements, and that he would probably remain three days in Cincinnati and then go on to Chicago, afterwards taking in the others towns in the reverse orders. Sam got his letter Friday afternoon and immediately answered it, directing his letter to the Gault House in Cincinnati. He told Tom the substance of the interview between him and Mr. Sherwood, and said that in accordance with that gentleman's orders he had removed all their business property to a big room in a factory building on Essex street, where he had hung out a sign which read as follows:

Office of
Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine,
The Finest Wood Polish in the World.
Sherwood & Wiley, Sole Mfrs.

In the postscript he added that Mr. Sherwood had been suddenly called to New York on business, but had left word at the house that his

son was to go to the mountains as soon as he returned to Englewood.

"I see myself going to the mountains this summer," said Tom to himself when he read his partner's letter two days afterward in the Gault House. "There's no use of my returning to Englewood now to have a row with my father. I'll stay right out on the road and let Tom attend to all the details of the business at our new office. I'm glad we're away from the house. It was only a question of a short time when we would have had to move anyway, as this business is growing every minute. I'm not going to let my father spoil the Lusterine prospects if I can help it. This is the chance of my life. Henry can have father's business for all I care. I can take care of myself and make my way in the world. I'm going to get at the top of the ladder by my own exertions alone."

Tom could afford to talk big, for he had just closed arrangements with the Cincinnati manufactory of the Buffalo house for a big and steady supply of the Lusterine which would turn the firm of Sherwood & Wiley in a good profit. He was now canvassing the furniture houses of the city with the view of getting his polish on the retail market. The success which had already attended his efforts elsewhere had stiffened his back, and he talked up the merits of his Lusterine like a Dutch uncle. His earnest manner carried conviction with it, and his samples clinched the business, so that he soon found that his polish was going like hot-cakes in the Queen City of the Middle West.

He had to send a telegram to Sam to send a gross of the bottles by express at once. Before he left Cincinnati he sold six gross altogether for immediate delivery, C. O. D., for which the firm in due course received checks amounting to \$129.60. Instead of going to Chicago Tom went to Louisville, Ky., where he did a proportionately satisfactory business. In the meantime Sam saw that the ten gross of bottles Tom had engaged at the Englewood Glass Works would soon be exhausted at the rate orders were coming in, so he telegraphed that fact to his partner and received instructions to order a special bottle made, in twelve gross lots, with the word "Lusterine" blown in it.

Tom also wrote him to place an order for a gross of gallon cans from a Pomona firm, and to have the name of the polish stamped in the tin. From Louisville Tom went to Evansville in Indiana, on the Ohio River, thence to Vincennes, on the Wabash River, then straight across to St. Louis, Missouri. He put in a week in St. Louis, including a trip up the Missouri River to Hannibal. From that point he came east as far as Springfield, the capital of Illinois, whence he took a train for Chicago. He spent another week in Chicago and sold over 1,000 bottles of the Lusterine, as well as six dozen cans of the polish. At intervals he received letters from Sam telling of rush orders received from the various places he had been, and of the money orders and checks he was every day in receipt of, showing that Lusterine was booming. Sam said he was obliged to hire an assistant, a boy about his own age, as he could not personally attend to everything.

Tom also learned that his father was still in

New York. It was now the middle of August and Tom had been away from Englewood a whole month. However, he was doing so well on the road, and he was so pleased with his success, that he decided to keep away, since Sam was managing the business in Englewood in great shape. To tell the truth, Tom was not at all anxious to meet his father. He knew such a meeting would only be attended by unpleasant results. So when he left Chicago he headed for Indianapolis, which is in the center of the State of Indiana. He sold 500 bottles of Lusterine here subject to immediate delivery.

Then he went to Brentwood, a neighboring town, and made a contract with another piano house for regular monthly consignments. Then he went to Dayton, Springfield and Columbus, Ohio, selling over 1,500 bottles in these cities. Thence he went to Toledo, Sandusky and Cleveland. In all these cities he boomed his polish to great advantage. As he was about to start for Erie he received a dispatch from Sam calling him to Englewood at once.

CHAPTER XVI.—Business Success.

"I wonder what's up now," mused Tom as he read the brief telegram a second time. "Something out of the ordinary surely. Well, there's nothing for me to do but hot-foot it for my native burg."

He bought a ticket for Englewood and boarded the Lake Shore Eastern Express. Sam was at the depot waiting for him.

"Say, old man, what's the trouble?" Tom asked as soon as his partner came up.

"Sorry to say it's bad news," replied Sam, soberly.

"Bad news!" gasped Tom. "What do you mean?"

"Your father has had a stroke of paralysis, and it's uncertain whether he'll recover or not."

That was bad news indeed, for in spite of the indifference his father had always shown toward him, Tom loved his parent very much in the depths of his heart. The tears sprang to his eyes as he said:

"That's tough, Sam. I must hurry to the house at once."

Minnie, the maid, admitted him. She looked very solemn, as befitted the circumstances.

"How is my father?" he asked her.

"He is very sick indeed, Master Tom," replied the girl.

The boy hurried upstairs and came face to face with his stepmother, who had just left her husband's bedside.

"My father—can I see him?" asked Tom, eagerly.

"He is very low," she answered in an agitated voice. "I doubt if he will recognize you. However, you may go in and see him."

A trained nurse was in attendance on the sick man. He approached the bed, but the nurse held up a warning hand and he stopped.

Tom watched his father for some time. It was a sad sight to see that strong man so suddenly cut down, as it were, in the prime of life, without having had an hour's sickness for years.

But such is life—the angel of death comes like a thief in the night, and it is the unexpected which always happens. However, Mr. Sherwood rallied next day, and then grew slowly better. Finally the doctor said that he was out of immediate danger.

But it was soon apparent that he never would be the same man again. As soon as he was able to get about a bit his physician ordered him to be sent to a well-known sanitarium to recuperate. Accordingly arrangements were made to that effect, and it was expected he would remain there three months or longer. After he had gone Tom's stepmother broached the subject of the Dunwoodie Academy, whereupon the boy told her that he had given up the idea of attending the school, as he had gone into business on his own account that summer, and it was panning out so well that he couldn't think of giving it up.

Business was now pouring in on the firm of Sherwood & Wiley. The two kettles which Sam and his assistant used continuously in the effort to keep up with the demand for the polish were entirely inadequate to meet the orders, so Tom added a special furnace and a large copper kettle to the firm's manufacturing department. He also hired an adjoining room for a shipping and storage department, and employed a man to take full charge of it. He also employed a young lady stenographer and bookkeeper. Then he went to the First National Bank and saw Mr. Hanford. He asked whether, as a special favor, the bank would open an account with Sherwood & Wiley, notwithstanding the fact that both members of the firm were miners.

"Well," replied the president of the First National, "it is against the rules of all commercial banks to receive accounts from minors, as they are not responsible, and a bank is liable at any time to suffer a loss through them. However, I think I can arrange the matter in this way: I will allow you to open an account and check against it, and will guarantee the bank against loss by becoming personally responsible for all your transactions. I do this out of regard for you, Mr. Sherwood, in consideration of the obligation I am under to you for saving my daughter's life. Although not without precedent, it is very rarely that a minor is ever permitted the privileges you have requested."

"I thank you very much, Mr. Hanford, for this favor, and assure you that you never will regret it. Some day this bank will be very glad that it numbers the firm of Sherwood & Wiley in its list of depositors."

Mr. Hanford laughed.

"You have a great deal of confidence in your future, it seems."

"I certainly have, and not without reason. We have the best polish in the world to-day, and that has been demonstrated by results. We have been in business scarcely three months, starting from absolutely nothing, and yet look at what we are already doing in the shipping line. I am going out on the road again on Monday. This time I shall take in New York City. I expect to get enough business there to make Sam's head swim."

"You are evidently a hustler, and I congratulate you on the success you are making with your lusterine."

"Thank you, Mr. Hanford. I will bring my partner down this afternoon and introduce him to you. Your cashier will need his signature also in his book, as he will sign all checks when I'm out of town."

"I shall be glad to make Mr. Wiley's acquaintance," replied Mr. Hanford.

CHAPTER XVII.—Conclusion.

Tom's step-mother made no objection when he told her quietly and respectfully that he was going to New York on business connected with his Lusterine. She showed no especial interest in his movements beyond asking how long he expected to be away.

"Two weeks or longer," he replied.

Henry, on the contrary, wanted to know all about his half-brother's trip.

"I wish I was going with you," he said eagerly. "You'll have a bang-up time, I suppose."

"I'm not going on a pleasure trip," Henry.

"That doesn't make any difference. You can't work all the time you're there. You'll see the city anyway. Go to the parks, the theaters, everywhere you want, for you'll be your own boss, and not tied to anybody's apron-string. It's a lucky thing for you that father's in the sanitarium."

"I wish you wouldn't talk that way, Henry."

"Why not? It's the truth, isn't it? He wouldn't let you go to New York on your own hook. You'd have to go to the academy and study, same as I have to do now at the High School."

"All right, Henry. Have it your own way."

"Father intends you to become a clerk in Mr. Goodenough's store on Adams street. I heard him say so. I'm going to become a clerk in father's store, and some day I'll own the business, and then if you want to come and work for me I'll give you a chance."

"I am much obliged to you, Henry," smiled Tom. "If my Lusterine business ever goes up the spout I'll remember your offer."

"How much are you making now?" asked Henry, curiously.

"Not over \$1,000 a minute just now, but things will improve," grinned Tom.

"A thousand dollars a minute!" exclaimed Henry. "I guess you aren't making anything."

"I won't enter into a dispute about the matter," laughed Tom, who by this time had packed his grip and was ready to leave the house for a final conference with Sam before he went to the station to catch the express for the metropolis. Tom reached New York that afternoon and went to the Murray Hill Hotel. Although he had never been in the chief city of the United States before, he did not feel particularly strange, owing to his experiences in the big cities of the West.

Next morning he started out with his sample suitcase to do business. He first gave his attention to the piano house, which occupied a large share of his time during his first week. He found his work cut out for him trying to convince the big piano manufacturers that there was no polish in the world that could hold a candle to Lusterine. But no obstacle discouraged Tom Sher-

wood. He was determined to push Lusterine to the front, and he went at the work with every bit of energy he had in him.

After interesting the piano house, he took up with the big furniture house, and then visited the managers of the great department stores. In tackling the latter Tom learned new points in the salesman's business—that it is not always the merit of an article that goes, but the way you manage to persuade the buyers to put in stock. He discovered there were wheels within wheels, and that these wheels require to be properly greased to make them run the way you want them to. He was smart enough to fall in with the situation, and tumble to the fact that a wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse. In plain English, he made it to the interest of the buyers to take hold of his Lusterine, for the advertisement he would get out of its introduction into the New York department stores was alone worth putting up a suitable cash consideration.

At the close of his second's week's stay in New York the orders he sent on to Sam made his partner's eyes bulge with wonder, and compelled an addition to the firm's working force at Englewood. Tom put in three weeks at the metropolis and then transferred his attention to Philadelphia, and from there to Baltimore. He then returned to New York to chase up a few callbacks. After that he returned home, having spent six weeks on the road.

He then planned a campaign into New England, with Boston as the center of operations, but before he started the firm of Sherwood & Wiley was compelled to move to much larger quarters and add extensively to their manufacturing and shipping departments. The New England trip was also successful, Tom securing many piano houses to his already large list of steady customers. Tom now began to employ canvassers and general agents to introduce Lusterine among the people. The orders of the firm for twelve gross of bottles became so frequent that the Englewood Glass Works began to entertain a good deal of respect for the boy firm which had started out by purchasing a lot of cast-off bottles.

About this time a Sunday edition of the Englewood Times came out with a full page illustrated special article giving a history of the rise and unparalleled success of Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine. What it didn't say in praise of this polish and the enterprising methods of its young inventor and his partner isn't worth mentioning. Of course the public didn't dream that Tom had to write out a good-sized check to the order of

the publishers of the Times before the article appeared in print, but he got his money out of it just the same. From that moment Tom began new and unique methods of advertising, which added to the expense. But money invested in judicious and consecutive advertising is never wasted.

When Mr. Sherwood returned from the sanitarium in January a comparatively well man, Tom was away on another prolonged Western Trip. Before he got back Sherwood pere discovered that the Invincible Lusterine was already one of the biggest and most promising industries in Englewood.

"You're an uncommonly smart boy, Thomas," remarked Mr. Sherwood, after he had gone over all the facts and figures in the case. "I'm beginning to think that my hardware business, which I have carried on so successfully for years in this town, will not be in it with your Lusterine in a year or so."

"Then, father, I understand that you withdraw all objections to my keeping on with this business?"

"Yes, it would be useless now for me to oppose you. The business speaks for itself, and there is no doubt in my mind but that you are the real power which has put it on a paying basis. I congratulate you, my son."

Tom was a happy boy after that momentous interview with his father. He had been half-afraid that he and his parent would come to an open rupture. The clouds, however, had now dispersed from his home horizon, though his step-mother was undisguisedly jealous of his business success, since it promised to throw her favorite son, Henry, completely in the shade.

To-day Sherwood's Invincible Lusterine is the staple polish on the market, and the firm and manufacturing establishment of Sherwood & Wiley are known from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes. They have a bank account at the First National that goes well into five figures and the bank reaps considerable advantage from their custom.

Tom Sherwood is engaged to be married to Olive Hanford, and the wedding is a function of the near future to which the best society in Englewood is looking forward to with much eagerness, for it undoubtedly will be a swell affair. Although the reputation of the Lusterine is now made, and it sells itself, Tom never neglects a chance to give it an additional boost, and to that end he is "Always on Deck."

Next week's issue will contain "A MINT OF MONEY; or, THE YOUNG WALL STREET BROKER."

CURRENT NEWS

KILLED BY FLYWHEEL

Albert Hansell, seventy-eight, was killed in Mount Holly, N. J., in the cold storage plant of his fruit farm, near Rancocas, when he was caught in the large flywheel of a gasoline engine. He went into the plant to start the engine. Members of the family found him dead alongside the huge revolving wheel.

MISSOURIAN TELLS TIME BY PICTURES OF FAMILY

A man in Missouri has a watch with tiny photographs of the members of his family pasted over its numerals.

The pictures represent his wife, himself and their ten children. Every time he pulls out the timepiece he has the unique pleasure of seeing his entire family, says the *Detroit News*.

He himself is 1 o'clock, and his wife is 2 o'clock. The children are arranged in the order of their birth, beginning with the oldest at 3 o'clock and continuing around to midnight, or noon, as you please, to the baby of the family.

A PIGEON MYSTERY

Residents of Birmingham, Ala., have an unsolved mystery in the invisible obstacle which prevented a flock of pigeons passing overhead from continuing a straight course. Time after time the birds essayed the passage, but at the particular point swerved and returned to renew the attempt. Whether it was fumes from a stack or a peculiar deflection of the wind from some building is not known and the pigeons couldn't tell.

A WHITE CROW

According to Charles Hutchins, naturalist, a pure white albino crow was captured by Joseph Cummings, a student at a Denver, Col., high school. "I believe it is the only pure white crow in existence," Mr. Hutchins is quoted. "It has been known that such a bird existed, because a few have been found dead and now are in museums in the East. The bird is pure white and in perfect health. It has not a colored or black feather on it. It even has albino eyes."

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"TURNED AROUND," by Nelson A. Hutto

Then there's a fine two-part serial entitled

"WITH EYES AND NOSE"

By **RALPH E. DYAR**

and a special article by **POLICE-CAPTAIN HOWARD** exposing the tricks of slick swindlers, entitled

"THE FLIM-FLAM ARTIST"

In addition to all this there are numerous short articles such as "A Bandit de Luxe," "Bomb Explodes in Auto," "The Cashier Didn't Know Her," "Attempts to Hold Up a Policeman," "How Crime Is Bred," "Theatre Thieves" and "Radio Catches a Fugitive."

Out Today On All Newsstands

Rob and the Reporters

— Or, —

Hustling for War News by Wireless

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER IV.—(Continued).

"I'm not certain that I have been taken on," replied Rob. "Mr. Finch changed his mind after you left. He is sending me to New York on another matter, and I can't tell what may come of it."

Be very sure the boy was wondering within himself what would come of it!

He got his breakfast and lay down for an hour, but his mind was so agitated that he was only able to sleep a part of the time.

The ten o'clock train took him to New York, and in due season he turned up at the office of the *Earth*.

Rob was left waiting a long time, but at last he was conducted into an elegantly furnished office, where he was received by Mr. Torrence, a middle-aged gentleman of very abrupt manners, who looked him over, and then said:

"I have read your war article. You write well. Were you born in Newfoundland?"

"Yes, sir," replied Rob.

"Then you are a British subject?"

"Yes."

"So much the better. Now listen. I am informed that no war correspondents are to be permitted to go to the front by either of the powers in this European conflict. All we sent have been turned down. Now, it is not the custom of the *Earth* to submit to being turned down. Would you be willing to jump to Europe as a secret war correspondent for this paper?"

"I certainly should," replied Rob, greatly elated.

"The pay will be seventy-five dollars a week and expenses. Satisfactory?"

"Entirely so."

"You could start at once?"

"Just as soon as you wish, but how am I to go? I know nothing of the present sailings of the steamers."

"You are not to go on a regular steamer. There is an English tramp leaving here for Liverpool to-morrow morning at ten. I have secured passage for two on her. She is the *Sterling Castle*."

"For two?"

"Yes. If you go I shall want you to act as escort to my wife's niece, Miss Edith Morley. Her mother has been caught in the war, and she is determined against my judgment to join her. Mrs. Morley is in Belgium, where she has been for some time under treatment by a specialist. We can get no tidings of her. It is a foolhardy piece of business, Randall, and I wash my hands of all responsibility. Miss Morley is her own mistress; if trouble comes of it, then it is up to her."

Rob heard all this with no little dismay.

So far as girls were concerned, he was one of those diffident fellows who had always kept himself in the background.

"You don't object, I hope?" demanded Mr. Torrence. "The matter must be decided at once. I have another young man in view, but my friend Finch has so highly recommended you that the engagement is yours if you want it."

"It will be all right," replied Rob, thus forced to an immediate decision. "Where in Belgium does Miss Morley wish to go?"

"To a small town called Durelle," was the reply. "She will make her own plans. I have nothing whatever to say in the matter. Now for your instructions. Pay close attention. I am returning to Bayville, where my summer home is, to-night, and shall not see you again except on the steamer."

Rob was closeted for an hour with Mr. Torrence.

When he left he had a thousand dollars in English money in his pocket and several letters of introduction to newspaper people in London.

It all seemed so amazing that he could scarcely credit it.

Yesterday he had been practically a tramp.

Now he was European war correspondent for the *New York Earth*.

CHAPTER V.

Across The Big Pond.

Rob spent the night at an uptown hotel, and at nine-thirty o'clock next morning, having made a few hasty purchases, he went aboard the *Sterling Castle* at her Brooklyn pier, and presented himself to Captain Tucker, who received him very cordially.

There was no reason why it should have been otherwise, for Rob, in the new suit he had bought the day before, was a mighty stylish looking fellow, while the captain turned out to be a Canadian, not so very much older than himself.

"Of course you comprehend the risk you are running, Mr. Randall," he said. "While I don't look for trouble, we are liable to be blown sky-high by some German cruiser, or to be made prisoners and carried to dear known where."

"I'm taking my chances with the rest of you, captain," replied Rob. "I haven't heard of any English tramp being captured by the Germans yet; have you?"

"No, I haven't," admitted the captain. "Just the same, there is no telling what may happen. I only speak so that you may be prepared."

"Are there to be any other passengers besides myself and Miss Morley?" asked Rob.

"One. A Mr. Walter Douglas."

"What is his business?"

"I haven't the faintest idea. But see here, we have only a very few staterooms. You understand we are not equipped for passengers. I shall have to put you in with him."

"That will be all right," said Rob. "If he is a pleasant fellow I shall be glad of his company."

(To be continued.)

GOOD READING

"STAR SPANGLED BANNER" STOPS NOISY WORKMAN

The workman refused to stop his pounding during the school assembly exercises at a Springfield, Mass., school. He'd "had his orders" and he wasn't going to stop at the request of any school principal. The principal could hardly make himself heard above the din. Suddenly he had a happy thought and announced, "We'll all sing 'The Star Spangled Banner.'"

Up rose the entire audience and the workman dropped his tools to stand at attention. By the time the song was finished the 12 o'clock whistle blew and the workman 'beat it to chow.'

MEANEST THIEF TAKES BABY CARRIAGE

When it was recently reported to the police that some miscreant had stolen the wheels from a baby carriage, apparently for the rubber tires with which they were equipped, it was thought that the "meanest" theft had been uncovered; but there's apparently a meaner thief still, ready to ply his trade which includes the appropriation of not only the wheels of a baby carriage but the entire carriage and its contents.

For, according to a report filed at headquarters recently, when Mrs. E. J. Lavigne, of Oxford street, Lawrence, Mass., went into an Essex street store to do some shopping, she parked her baby carriage on the sidewalk outside, but when she emerged from the emporium the carriage had disappeared.

Police officials are of the opinion that it was lucky that Mrs. Lavigne instead of leaving her baby in the carriage took it with her into the store.

THE BANDIT OF THE AMAZON

Along the upper tributaries of the Great Amazon River that like a knife cuts across the continent of South America, live animals, birds and fish that are exotic, strange and uncanny.

In the turgid waters, through the swamps that steam with the heat of a tropical sun, in air so still that death is noise contrasted with it, through forests that are ancient, immense, tangled and forbidding, dwell innumerable creatures of nature, wonderful and horrible.

Among these creatures are the pirarucu that is sometimes 250 pounds in weight; alligators, large and small; the araya or the sting-ray; the kandi-roo, a fish that penetrates human flesh and is fatal; the sucurujus, which are supposed by the Indians to possess hypnotic powers. But as curious as any of these and more deadly than most is the Piranha fish, the scientific name of which is *Serraselfus piraya*. This even more than the alligator is dreaded by the natives. Its ferocity is boundless. It attacks other fish and takes mouthfuls out of their fins and tails. Its size is not much larger than that of a herring; but it often attacks en masse men bathing in the Amazon.

Swimmers in the tributaries of this river are wary of these creatures, for they shoot forward suddenly, bite the arms, the legs and then retreat to a short distance waiting to rush forward again. Their teeth are so sharp that they have been known to bite off the ends of paddles as these were drawn through the water astern of the boat. A tapir caught by a South American traveler had had its nose bitten off by this fish and when the prizes of the hunt are floated through the water behind the hunter's canoe, natives must stand guard over their prize or else they will discover at the end of the journey that their hunting has been of no avail; the piranha will have devoured the hunter's prize completely.

The physiology of the piranha fish is admirably equipped for its role as bandit of the river. It is narrow from side to side, it is not too large for speed and within its jaws are teeth, lancet-shaped, as sharp as those of a shark.

So knifelike are the teeth of this fish that the natives of Guiana use them as sharpeners for the tiny arrows they use in their blow guns. The Indians draw the arrows back and forth between two of the teeth and make in this way an arrow of deadly sharpness. This arrow is often dipped in poison and is one of the oldest and most primitive of Indian weapons.

The piranha fish has two other names. It is often known as the caribe, and some tribes called it the pirai.

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INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

RADIO STYLES CHANGE

Two years ago when radio first became known to the man on the street there was a general belief among laymen that some new idea would soon come out and upset all the principles previously discovered in this new art of communication. But nothing of the kind has happened, and in this respect radio is repeating the history of other inventions.

Take the telephone, for example. The telephone is fundamentally the same today as the first model which Alexander Graham Bell produced. Likewise the principle of the steam engine is the same now as when Robert Fulton made the first steamboat. Hardly ever has a great invention later undergone a fundamental change in the principles underlying it. Obsolescence comes in styles, but not in principles. Refinements are made, costs cut and parts made simpler and more rugged, but no revolutionary change occurs.

The same is true of radio. Circuits that gave good results two years ago give good results now, although simpler circuits have been developed, using fewer controls.

It is a fact that the public is now buying higher grade parts than they were a year or two ago, but they are still buying well known, tried and true brands.

Five years ago a certain small concern produced an amplifying transformer which was the first offered for general sale to the public. Today that transformer is identical with the one first produced and its efficiency as well as its slogan have become famous. This manufacturer has developed the so-called reflex circuit to a point where any one can put together a set which will bring in broadcasting stations within a thousand miles radius and do so on a loud speaker.

DAILY CHARGING

The selection of a storage battery for operating the detector and amplifier tubes in a radio receiver depends primarily upon the facilities for charging the battery and upon the number of tubes and the length of time each day the tubes are in operation. For some single tube receivers the currents necessary to heat the filament is approximately one ampere and if the set is to be operated for three hours each day the total discharge of the battery a day will be three ampere hours. On this basis a storage battery having a total capacity of sixty ampere hours would supply the required amount of filament currents for a period of twenty days; if, however, a receiver employing three tubes is used the total discharge of the battery a day under the same conditions will be nine ampere hours and the battery will require charging in approximately seven days.

It is apparent, therefore, that if the amount of current drawn from a battery is large frequent recharging will be necessary. In addition to the expense considerable inconvenience results in the transportation of a battery to and from a service station, due to the weight and also to the fact

that the set is inoperative while the battery is being charged. If a battery of large amperage is selected the charging periods will not be as frequent, but the weight is considerably increased; for example, an eighty ampere hour battery six volt acid type weighs about 27 pounds while a 120 ampere hour battery weighs 58 pounds.

For these reasons continuity of service, efficient operation and convenience necessitate the employ of charging apparatus in combination with the receiving set so that removal of the battery with consequent interruption of operation may be avoided. If the only available supply of current is alternating it is necessary to employ a rectifier and associated apparatus, first to reduce the voltage of the circuit and second to convert the alternating current into a current which flows in one direction.

A half wave rectifier, converts the alternating current into a series of half wave pulsations amounting in effect to a flow of direct current. Some transformers reduce the potential of the 119 volt line circuit so that after rectification from ten to fifteen volts are impressed upon the six volt battery. The secondary winding of the transformer has two coils, one of which consists of a few turns of heavy wire for supplying current to the filament, the other coil having a large number of turns for furnishing the battery charging current.

The current flows through the bulb from the plate to the filament during one half cycle, but no current flows during the other half cycle, and consequently a series of unidirectional pulsations of charging current flow through the storage battery.

If the storage battery is connected to the center points of a double pole double throw switch, while the receiver set is connected to one side of the switch and the rectifier to the other side, a convenient and safe arrangement is obtained whereby the receiver is automatically disconnected when the switch is closed between the rectifier and the battery. When the switch is closed in the other direction the battery operates directly on the receiver and the rectifier is disconnected.

It is evident, therefore, that the addition of charging equipment to a receiving set employing vacuum tubes permits the battery to be maintained in a fully charged condition by the application of a daily uninterrupted and efficient service at a charge of short duration, thus securing comparatively small expense.

NEW RADIO RULES

Broadcasting, stripped of difficulties menacing both the industry and millions of listeners, is entering upon an era of efficient and orderly development, according to C. B. Cooper, a member of the National Radio Chamber of Commerce.

"It will take a long while to work out the complete plan devised by the Hoover conference," says Mr. Cooper, "but as it goes into effect, broadcasting should become more and more efficient. One big thing already accomplished is

that American manufacturers can now go ahead with the designing and production of equipment with the knowledge that wave lengths will be below 600 meters, and that broadcasting is headed toward a definite goal.

In this broadcasting plan there is no opportunity for a monopoly of broadcasting wave lengths, because into both Class A and Class B wave length allotments will come arbitrary divisions of time. The wave lengths between 222 and 285 Class B will be scattered throughout the country. Wave lengths between 288 and 545, Class A will be divided into 50 and allotted to the various districts throughout the United States.

"This should create a very high-class service, because it is planned that no two Class B broadcasting stations shall operate on the same wave length at any one time in the entire country. It should be remembered, however, that, while there can be many Class B stations, they will all have specific time allotments and 50 stations will work at once at different wave lengths."

Discussing the influence of the new scheme of wave lengths upon radio at sea, Mr. Cooper says:

"At 300 meters there is a break in the wave length band for marine work. This is an international ship wave length and cannot be changed, but it is recommended that only a minimum of traffic be carried on this wave length between ship and ship and ship and shore.

"At 450 meters there is also a break for marine work, but on this wave length it has been requested that ships remain silent between the hours of 7 and 11 and that later, as fast as ships can be returned, that the working wave of ships be changed to above 600 meters.

"During the Hoover conference it was brought out that spark sets aboard ships create considerable interference, and there has been some discussion about trying to find a way to eliminate spark sets. This, however, must not be done because the present radio law requires the carrying of radio when 50 or more persons are aboard ship and the Government cannot, or at least should not, prohibit the steamships from carrying spark sets, because by so doing they would, as a result of the present patent situation, place steamship companies in a position wherein they would be compelled to resort to one company."

SUPER-HETERODYNE

There are five fundamental methods used to obtain louder signals; (1) Regeneration; (2) Super-regeneration; (3) Radio frequency amplification; (4) Audio frequency amplification; (5) Superheterodyne.

The limitations of each scheme are as follows: (1) Regenerative circuits, when permitted to oscillate, act as small transmitters and create interference for nearby receiving sets; (2) Super-regeneration is not selective and it is difficult to control; (3) Untuned radio frequency amplification by means of transformer coupling does not do justice to all wave lengths and tuned radio frequency amplification requires too many adjustments to tune the various circuits; (4) Audio amplification is limited to two stages; (5) The super-heterodyne is free from the limitations

possessed by other methods of amplifying but is complex in construction. The super-heterodyne is sensitive to weak impulses. It is a sharp tuner, but not critical. It is easy to operate, as it has only two controls.

A super-heterodyne consists chiefly of two parts, a frequency changer and a long wave receiver set. It is based on this reasoning: a radio frequency amplifier will operate easily on long wave lengths but not so on short wave lengths. It was imperative during the World War to devise a method capable of picking up feeble short wave signals used by the Germans in trench, submarine and other communication systems. Thus the super-heterodyne was invented by Major E. H. Armstrong while in France. He studied the problem and decided to receive the short waves and then change them to long waves, making it possible to use efficient long wave radio frequency amplifiers.

The wave changer can be built in an entire separate unit and be as distant from the ordinary receiving set as an audio-amplifier unit. A wave changer consists of a detector tube having two frequencies supplied to it; the frequency of the incoming signal picked up by the antenna; and second, a frequency furnished by a vacuum tube oscillator, called the "heterodyne," which feeds the detector by means of a suitable coupling. The output of the frequency changer has a frequency equal to the difference between the signal frequency and the frequency of the heterodyne oscillator. This difference can be varied by adjusting the heterodyne frequency.

For example if an incoming signal has a wave length of 400 meters or 750 kilo-cycles and the heterodyne tube is adjusted to oscillate at 850 kilocycles, the difference between the two frequencies will be 100 kilocycles. The heterodyne could be adjusted to oscillate at 650 kilocycles and the difference would still be 100 kilocycles, it makes little difference which way it is adjusted. The difference in the two frequencies is impressed upon the intermediate frequency amplifier. The super-heterodyne can be controlled by two adjustments, one for the wave length of the incoming signal and the others to control the frequency of the oscillator tube. One is called the wave length control and the other the frequency changer.

The super-heterodyne is designed to overcome all difficulties of radio frequency amplification at short wave lengths. It converts the frequency of the incoming signal to a value that can be amplified without difficulty.

To operate a super-heterodyne the signal is tuned in just as with any receiving set. The incoming signal is then mixed with a signal coming from the local oscillator tube or heterodyne. The result is a signal of much lower frequency equivalent to a high wave length. This low frequency signal is passed through an intermediate frequency amplifier designed especially for long wave amplification. The signal is then passed on to the loudspeaker and audio frequency amplifier or phone.

Each stage of amplification is shielded, preferably in a metal compartment. It is not necessary to have a top on the compartment. All grid leads must be as short as possible.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, MAY 16, 1924

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

THE LARGEST NEWSPAPER

In 1859 there appeared in New York the largest newspaper on record, measured by size of the sheet. The dimensions were 9 by 6 feet. It was called the Illustrated Quadruple Constellation, and consisted of eight pages. For eight weeks forty persons were busy with its compilation. It was intended by the founders that a copy should be issued every century.

AMERICA'S OLDEST ROAD

The oldest road on the North American continent is the old Spanish road built across Mexico in the sixteenth century. It is shaped like the letter "Y" with the stem starting at Vera Cruz on the Gulf. The northern prong touches the Pacific at San Blas, and the southern tip at Acapulco. Because of the road the westbound convoys from the Philippines were spared the dangerous navigation around Cape Horn. There is still evidence that this old trail was used by the Indians before the Spaniards broadened it from a pack-mule path to a highway.

FALSE TEETH STOLEN WHILE MEN EAT

Contrary to the practice of most persons, Tony Pollock of Chelsea, Mass., takes out his teeth before starting to eat. This habit cost him the loss of a brand new set of false ones while he was eating his dinner in a Chelsea restaurant.

Tony laid the new set of incisors and molars on the table before he started to eat and when he had finished he was overcome by a sense of something missing and found that his teeth had been stolen. Although he had not used them much in the process of Fletcherizing his food Tony feels the loss keenly because of the fact that he paid \$86 for them.

GETTING FIRE FROM COMPRESSED AIR

The inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula have a method of obtaining fire which is probably unique among primitive peoples. They utilize the principle that the compression of air raises its

temperature, one known to every man who has ever pumped up a tire, but one which it is most surprising to find in the possession of a group of aborigines.

A tiny pump of wood, hardly more than three inches in length and with a bore of about half an inch, is used. This pump is open at one end, closed at the other. In it fits closely a plunger equipped with a round knob at one end and a piston-like expansion at the other. The piston end of the plunger is dipped in tinder, which the native carries in a moth's cocoon, which makes an absolutely water-tight container. The piston is placed in the pump and the knob struck sharply. The compression of air raises the temperature to such a degree that the tinder is ignited and when the piston is withdrawn it is found to be glowing. The native blows on the glowing mass, inserts it into his ready-laid fuel, and presto! he has his fire.

This method is quicker by far than the friction method used by most primitive races.

LAUGHS

Lady (at piano)—They say you love good music. Youth—Oh, that doesn't matter. Pray go on.

History Prof—Why are the Middle Ages known as the Dark Ages? Wise Fresh—Because there were so many knights.

"Has your daughter a voice that could help in the choir?" Mother—Mercy, yes. When she's out of humor, you can hear her talkin' for half a square.

Teacher—Now who can tell me what political economy is? Mike (embryo Tammany statesman)—Gittin' the most votes for the least money.

"There is too much system in this school business!" growled Tommy. "Just because I snickered a little, the monitor turned me over to the principal, and the principal turned me over to paw!" "Was that all?" "No; paw turned me over his knee!"

Teacher—Last Sunday, dear child, we read about Joseph and Pharaoh. What was done to Joseph? Tommy—He was made to sit on the roof. "Why, Tommy, what do you mean by such nonsense?" "Well, you read that Pharaoh set Joseph over his house."

Wife—George, I want to see that letter. Husband—What letter, dear? Wife—That letter you just opened. I know by the handwriting it is from a woman, and you turned pale when you read it. Hand it here, sir! Husband—Here it is, dear. It is from your dressmaker.

A sharp boy in Grangetown walked into a grocer's shop. "Please, sir," he said to the proprietor, "mother told me to ask you whether there is such a thing as a sugar trust." "Of course there is," was the answer. "Well, then, mother wants to be trusted for two pounds."

BRIEF BUT POINTED

WINDOW WASHER BUYS \$100,000 BUILDING

Tanke Martivi Soklowski of Newark, N. J., stopped washing windows long enough to buy a \$100,000 apartment house, and then took his mop and bucket and went back to work.

Soklowski came to this country twelve years ago. He has a wife and four children and works for the Washington Window Cleaning Company. He bought the fashionable Clintonia Apartment, No. 884-886 South 14th street, Newark, and paid down \$15,000. The building is a four-story, sixteen-family structure with a marble entrance.

This is the second apartment house in the Soklowski family. Four years ago his wife bought the six-family house in which they live with their four children at No. 750 Hunterdon street. The price was \$15,000 and she paid \$4,000 down.

"We both work," Mrs. Soklowski said. "My husband is never sick. He never smokes, drinks or goes to the movies. He works all day and many times at night. That is all."

THE COWRY

The cowry or cowrie is a species of mollusk, some of which are very familiar as decorative objects and as gurnishing a medium of exchange with uncivilized peoples. The shell is more or less of an oval form, and is usually thick, polished and beautifully colored. The young shells are more typically snail-like, but in the adults the large last whorl more or less conceals the others and has its outer lip bent in toward the inner. The animal has a broad head, and protrudible proboscis, eyes associated with the long horns, and a broad foot protruded through the elongated aperture. The mantle or skin fold which forms the shell, as in other mollusks, extends over the whole or most of the surface, and thus conceals during life what gives the dead shells half their charm. The cowry is a sluggish creature, creeping slowly on rocks and coral reefs. A cowry found in the Maldive Islands was long used as currency, and is still so used in Africa. In Siam over 6,000 cowries were required to make a tical, worth 50 cents of our money. Cowries are frequently used in England as counters in games of chance, and have also had their share in later days in the conchological craze, and small fortunes have been spent in gathering that wealth of varied colors which a good "cowry cabinet" displays.

ABOUT A NEEDLE

It may surprise a good many to learn that no fewer than twenty-two separate processes are required to make the tiny steel needle familiar to every one, but the fact gives one an idea of the perfection to which its manufacture has been brought. A needle of the time of Queen Victoria's

accession and a comparison of the one made to-day shows what strides the industry has made, and what patience and inventiveness have been brought to bear upon it. A thick, badly-shaped shaft, white in color, with an irregular point, a head much larger than the body of the object, and a roughly-drilled circular eye; such was the needle with which the seamstress of 1837 had to sew. The modern needle is fine, with an evenly-tapered point, a head no wider than the shaft, an eye perfectly smooth inside and well shaped, and a polish like glass, so that it slips easily through the material sewn. To understand to what a pitch of perfection needle making has been brought, one has only to examine the "calyx-eyed" needle, one of the latest developments of the article. As it is threaded through a slit in the top of the head instead of in the ordinary way, there must be sufficient elasticity to allow the thread to pass into the eye without being frayed or cut, and at the same time the sides of the head must be capable to springing together again so as to prevent the cotton from slipping out after the needle is threaded. It is evident that to ensue elasticity the needle must be tempered with the greatest regularity; and extreme care has to be taken to make the sides of the slit perfectly smooth, so that the thread will not be cut while passing through it.

SUGAR FROM DAHLIAS

Scientific investigators years ago discovered that the beet contained a considerable content of sugar. Since then the raising of sugar beets has grown to be quite an industry. Now science has discovered that the dahlia, which has been cultivated in a large variety of beautiful colored blossoms, also contains a large content of sugar that is sweeter than the sugar of cane or beets. Flower gardeners have long prized the dahlia as a thing of beauty. Now medical science prizes it as a thing of joy for patients suffering from diabetes.

Diabetes patients are known to have an insatiable longing for sweet things which are dangerous to their health. Saccharin has been the only sweet allowed those suffering from diabetes, and it is thought that this form of sweet is injurious to the digestive organs. The sugar obtained from the roots of dahlias is half again as sweet as cane or beet sugar and does not harm the patient. Statistics show that there are almost 1,000,000 persons suffering from diabetes in this country, so that the discovery of dahlia sugar is second in importance only to the discovery of insulin.

It is said that flowers on the dahlia plants detract from the amount of sugar contained in the roots, so it would seem improbable that the dahlia may be made to serve the dual purpose of being a beautiful decoration and at the same time serve is the more utilitarian capacity as a producer of medicinal sugar.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

WORLD'S STRONGEST X-RAY TO TREAT CANCER

Cancer, most insidious of diseases and one that has defied medical science for generations, is to be again attacked, this time by Dr. Lewis Friedman, with an X-Ray of 250,000 volts. Doctor Friedman is a noted radiologist and cancer specialist and holds forth great hope for success in his new experiments. He says that the rays from his machine are identical with some radium rays, and by its use hopes to make progress in the fight to drive out the cancer scourge. So far he has obtained very favorable results with the powerful ray, and has announced that in a far advanced case which he had treated he had reduced one dimension of an internal abdominal cancer three-quarters of an inch, using the extremely high voltage of 250,000. Radium has been tried on a number of patients and in many cases a fair degree of success attended the efforts, but Doctor Friedman hopes to accomplish even more with his new machine.

WHEN GREENWICH VILLAGE WAS A HEALTH RESORT

One hundred years ago Greenwich Village was chiefly known as one of the best health resorts on Manhattan Island. Tea rooms, artists' studios and Italian restaurants along Macdougall street were too far in the future to be dreamed of. It was the yellow fever scourge of 1822 which gave an impetus to a building movement in the Greenwich locality with the result that within a few years the little settlement north of Canal street came to be regarded as an integral part of the city.

One of its well-known thoroughfares, Bank street, which to-day retains a great deal of its early private home characteristics, acquired its name from those yellow fever days. Many of its banking offices in the lower part of the city moved to temporary quarters on or near what became known as Bank street, and for several months it was an important financial centre. One of the early chroniclers says in describing the uptown migration in 1822: Saturday, the 24th of August, our city presented the appearance of a town besieged. From daybreak till night one line of carts containing boxes, merchandise and effects was seen moving toward Greenwich Village and the upper parts of the city. Carriages and hacks, wagons and horsemen were scouring the streets and filling the roads; persons with anxiety strongly marked on their countenances and with hurried gait were hustling through the streets. Temporary offices and stores were erecting, and even on the ensuing day, Sunday, carts were in motion and the saw and hammer busily at work. Within a few days the Custom House, the Post Office, the banks, the insurance offices and the printers of newspapers located themselves in the village or in the upper part of Broadway.

It was also recorded during this period that a citizen one Saturday night saw corn growing at

the present corner of West Fourth and Eleventh streets and on Monday morning a large frame house had been erected there.

So necessary had these periodical removals to Greenwich Village become that in 1803 the Merchants' National Bank, soon after its organization, purchased several lots on the west side of Hudson street, between Horatio and Jane streets, and erected a banking house costing about \$16,000. It was occupied during the epidemic of 1803 and again in 1805 and several times thereafter. After 1832 the scourges, which had devastated the city for so long a period, gradually died out as the result of better methods for conserving health and in 1944 the bank, having no further use for its uptown home, sold the property.

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When it is going to rain, the solid particles gather in round clusters, and when snow is coming white flakes appear, while if hail is on the way, the entire mixture becomes viscous.

These auguries are so accurate that farmers for miles around telephone the owner of the magic bottle when they wish to make certain that their crops will not be damaged by another day's delay in the fields.

The French Academy of Science is sending a committee of chemists to study the strange vial, but the farmer says he will not permit it to be opened.

A similar bottle owned by the man's grandfather burst with a loud report forty years ago when a September hail-storm was followed by a snowfall that turned into a light drizzle.

LITTLE ADS

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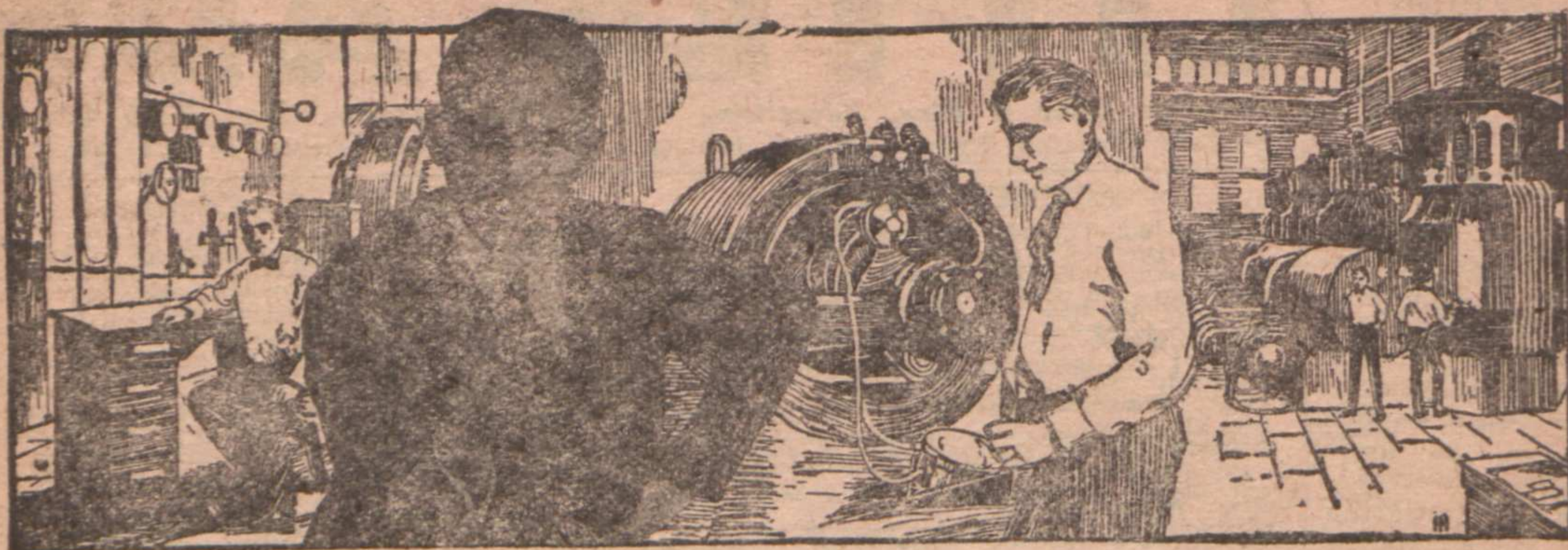
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